

FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE REORGANIZATION OF THE TARANAKI MILITIA.

No. 1.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY TO CAPTAIN ROOKES.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Auckland 1st November 1861.

SIR,—

I am directed by Mr. Fox to inform you that his Excellency Sir George Grey, the Administrator of the Government, has been pleased to appoint you to proceed to New Plymouth to enquire into and report upon the state of the Militia and Volunteer Force in the Province of Taranaki; and to enclose for your information and guidance a copy of the memorandum noted in the margin, and to direct your special attention to the points enumerated therein, on which the Government require information.

No. 413.

Under Secretary to Colonial Secretary, 30th Oct., 1861.

You will be good enough to proceed to New Plymouth by the "Airedale," on Thursday next, for the above mentioned purpose.

The Government will pay for your passage (inclusive of expenses for wines, &c.,) by that vessel between Auckland and New Plymouth, and for the time during which you are on shore at Taranaki you will be allowed at the rate of one pound per diem in addition to your present salary.

I have &c.,

Captain Rookes, &c., &c.,
Auckland.

W. GISBORNE,
Under Secretary.

Enclosure in No. 1.

THE UNDER SECRETARY TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Taranaki Militia.

The present condition of the Militia Force, and the current expenditure on account of it in the Province of Taranaki, require the serious attention of the Government.

Since the cessation of hostilities that condition is more and more anomalous, and the expense is excessive in proportion to any beneficial result.

Active duties have nearly wholly ceased, but a large and comparatively ineffective Militia Force is kept up, congregated in town, exposed to the demoralizing consequences of inactivity, semi-civil and semi-military, but its utility impaired in either capacity.

Expenditure in the mean time, on account thereof, is going on at the rate of about three thousand five hundred pounds sterling a month.

This state of affairs has been hitherto maintained not purely for military objects, but also avowedly for political reasons, arising out of the insecurity of agricultural pursuits, out of the heavy losses sustained by the settlers, and their present inability to support themselves and their families.

The objects which I think should be kept in view with reference to the Taranaki Militia are, First,—To organize a thoroughly effective local armed force for military purposes.

Secondly,—To give every facility to the majority of the settlers to return to their homesteads, and to follow their industrial occupations either in town or in the country.

Thirdly,—To furnish as far as practicable every settler with means of defence in cases of emergency.

Fourthly,—To regulate the Expenditure on these accounts with the strictest economy consistent with practicable efficiency.

Generally speaking, it appears to me that a more effective and economical mode of attaining the two-fold object, the security and the settlement of the Province, would be to maintain in concert with the troops of the line a local force, small though it may be, well armed, well disciplined, and exclusively devoted to the service in which it is employed, and thus render available without restriction the industrial labor of the remainder of the settlers; the question of temporary aid, pecuniary or otherwise, to them in that direction being kept apart from that of local defence.