

Enclosure to Despatch No. 139.

MEMORANDUM.

In the Secretary of State's Despatch, No. 88, of the 25th August, 1863, the following remarks are made in reference to the conduct of a chief named William King.

"In the same way at a public meeting where Teira offered the land, and during the many months which elapsed before the survey, he (William King) gave no reasons for his opposition, he afforded no explanations of it, either such as was provided for him by others at the time, or such as might be drawn from the statements which you have now conveyed to me."

In reference to this point it will be found by an enclosure to Governor Browne's Despatch, No. 10, of 25th January, 1860, that in the official account of the meeting of the 8th March, 1859, it is reported that William King gave a reason for his opposition to the sale of the piece of land, insisting on his own possession of it. In his letter to the Governor of the 25th April, 1859, this chief again gave the Governor the same reason against the sale of the land, saying:—"I will not agree to our resting place being sold, for that resting place belongs to the whole of us." Again, on the 29th November, 1859, this same chief informed Mr. Parris that the reason he would not consent to the sale of the land was, "That the land belonged to Taylor together with all of us."

Although attention was first specifically called to this point in Sir George Grey's Despatch, No. 96, of 11th August, 1863, it will be found that the Natives, early in 1860, with almost earnest passion, asserted that William King's answer was such as it now really proves to have been, and that it had been misinterpreted. Their allegations on this point were, at that time, either not attended to, or not believed. But their statement is that William King answered as follows:—

"Yes, his (Teira's) title is good to his own pieces within the boundaries of that land two or three pieces. Our title is equally good to our own pieces; some have one, or two, or three, or four within that block." William King stated this, but what he said has been misinterpreted by the Land Commissioner of Taranaki, who asserts that William King said the whole of the land was Teira's. It was his determination to take the land by force, and his ignorance of the Maori language, which made him pervert what William King said.

The question of a sale of this piece of land involved the interest and conduct of many other persons besides William King, and it will be found in various letters transmitted by Governor Browne that the Natives invariably alleged the same reasons for opposing the sale of this piece of land which Teira offered to dispose of, although some of those were only received during the progress of the war; as for instance,—“It was a land of complicated claims, the property of the whole tribe, the site of village; and cultivations, and besides that, William King and his tribe were in occupation of it.”

Upon reference to the enclosures to Governor Browne's Despatches, it will be found that the Natives urged, in letters transmitted to the Secretary of State, sometimes in terms of humble supplication, language often identical with that which is stated in the Secretary of State's Despatch No. 88, of the 25th August, 1863, to have been put into their mouths, in Sir G. Grey's Despatch of the 24th April of the same year.

The following extracts from such Native letters will show this:—

"Was it by their permission that our lands, inherited from our ancestors, became our property, which lands have all been taken from us, at the point of the sword?"

"Was it they who gave our ancestors all their cultivated lands," which I have already mentioned, "when they went from Waikanae, which cultivations the soldiers have taken with the edge of the sword."

"We have portions of the land at Waitara, within the boundaries of the land which Teira wrongfully sold to the Governor. This land belongs to us, and to those who were driven off that land, and belonged to the ancestors of us all."

"How can they justify the denial of our claims, or of those who have been forcibly driven from it?"

"In our opinion, Teira's act was a great crime, and nothing can be said in his behalf which can hide his unjust act."

"Is thieving, indeed then, a legitimate occupation? It has been said to be a wicked one. It must be that only a theft by a Maori is wrong; but when an European commits one, it is a laudable action."

"If that land shall be permanently wrested from them, then this saying will be handed down through all future generations—'that land was forcibly and unlawfully taken away by a Governor appointed by the Queen of England.'"

"They say the land all belongs to Teira. No; that land belongs to us all—to orphans and to widows."

"Should we look to the Queen—or to whom? We had always thought that the law afforded protection from wrong! We are, at the present time, wholly at a loss as to what course to adopt."

"Now, we are altogether perplexed; and exclaim—'Alas! alas! this is a new proceeding on the part of our Queen.' The good which used to be associated with the mention of your name, and which caused the Maoris of this island to regard you only as our mother, has been lost. Your name was then sweet to the hearts of your Maori people."

"Your Majesty's name also became strange to this people. Now, for the first time, we have