

found that the first affray, in which Rawiri, the native assessor, one of the most respected natives of the Puketapu tribe, and six others (were killed), by Katatore, partly arose from Rawiri attempting to cut the boundary of a piece of land which he had offered for sale to Mr. G. Cooper, the Land Commissioner of the Taranaki district. It appears that Katatore had, long ago, stated his intention of retaining this land, and had threatened to oppose anyone who should offer to sell it; Rawiri, however, on account of some quarrel with Katatore, proposed selling the land, and was desired by Mr. Cooper to cut the boundary."

"Rawiri proceeded accordingly, with 22 others, on the morning of the third of August last, and had succeeded in cutting some part of the boundary line, when Katatore and party rushed down from his pa, and, after warning Rawiri twice, without effect, to desist, fired and killed him and six others; four were severely wounded, and four slightly wounded."

"I fear that further bloodshed may be expected; and as unfortunately it has arisen about a land question, Katatore will have all the sympathy of those who are opposed to the sale of land. The relations and friends of the deceased Chief Rawiri, who are principally resident within the settlement, and who are called the friendly natives, as being in favour of the sale of land, are determined to have revenge for the death of their people."

2. Unfortunately it happened that this feud during its course was aggravated by unwise acts and violent language on the part of some of our people; a course which could only render the Maoris more apprehensive of evil to themselves, and more determined to stand aloof from us. See Colonel Nugent's Despatch, dated 20th September, 1855—(Parliamentary Paper, July 1860, p. 143).

3. In a letter written a few days after that date, Mr. Riemenschneider (a minister of the Lutheran Church, resident in the midst of the Taranaki tribes), reported to the Native Secretary the state of feeling among the natives of his district. He stated that "any intervention by military force in the feud would be generally viewed as the first step in a general and grand movement on the part of the Government to dispossess the natives by physical force of their inherited soil; which if once permitted by the latter to be successfully entered upon by the former, would most certainly be proceeded with, and be carried out through the whole length and breadth of the island, until every inch of land would have passed away from the native owners into the hands of the Europeans, and the aboriginal inhabitants of the country themselves would have been totally exterminated."

"Thus fully (he adds) the whole case has repeatedly been argued before me, during the last fortnight, by the natives in the Taranaki district, and there can be no doubt that they are in earnest about it."

"The most sober and quietly disposed amongst them declare, in a manner not to be mistaken, that they will rise, because they feel convinced that it will be necessary for the defence and preservation of their life, liberty, and possessions, against a system of violence and oppression threatening them and theirs."

4. From that time until July, 1859, the deadly feud was going on. In the course of this time, in the month of January, 1858, Katatore himself was waylaid and murdered. This was a murder of revenge, and one which we might have punished, without seeming to be fighting for a piece of land. Still the Government refrained from interfering, beyond issuing a proclamation in the following month, February, 1858. That proclamation warned the natives against assembling with arms within the boundaries of a certain district. The proclamation was accompanied by an official comment in the Maori Messenger, which, after explaining the reasons of our non-interference, proceeded thus:—"While indulging this hope, we are startled by the news of another and more frightful murder. Blood is spilt on land which the Queen has granted. This cannot be allowed to pass in silence. The Governor has therefore spoken his word. He still says, 'I shall not interfere. Both parties are doing wrong, but it is not my present intention to employ force against either, while they keep outside the limits of the English settlement, but I will allow neither to come armed within these limits. I will not permit fighting in my presence.'"

5. The effect of this state of things on the natives may be gathered from the letter of Ritatona Te Iwa. (See Appendix, No. 4.)

The consequences of these continued troubles were most disastrous to the native interests. The Ngatiawa tribe had been one of the most industrious and thriving in New Zealand. "In 1854, William King's tribe possessed 150 horses, 300 head of cattle, 40 carts, 35 ploughs, 20 pairs of harrows, 3 winnowing machines, and 10 wooden houses." (Dr. Thompson, New Zealand, vol. 2, p. 224.) In 1858 most of these indications of prosperity had passed away; fragments of threshing machines were seen lying among the ashes of a burnt pa; oxen lying dead between the hostile encampments, cultivations abandoned, and fences broken down.

6. Thus, then, it came to pass that through five years of deadly strife, the Queen's sovereignty was never manifested by act.

There was nothing to show that it was a reality; a power able and willing to protect life or property. In saying this, I have no intention to cast blame upon any one. It would be an ill use to make of our present troubles to find in them means for assailing the characters of public men. In fact, all such considerations would lead us away from the point to which alone I am looking, which is, not the comparative merits of our public men in our eyes, but the way in which our Administration, taken as a whole, must have presented itself in the view of the natives.

All that I wish to be noticed and remembered is the fact itself. These were the very cases which, in the beginning of our colonization, had been specified by the Secretaries of State, as cases in which the Colonial Government would be bound to interfere. When the time came the Government did not interfere. Let us not therefore criminate men who endeavoured to do the best under very difficult circumstances; who did not interfere only because they did not judge it possible to interfere with effect, and who therefore acquiesced in a state of things which was a great calamity for both races. At any rate, we did not act. If so, let us honestly admit that to have been the case. Let us not go on tacitly assuming, or even broadly asserting, that we have throughout fully performed our part. Let us avow