

General will forward a copy of the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry to which it relates to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for War, I beg to enclose a copy of a Memorandum on the subject, drawn up by the Auditor-General of the Colony, which I have the honor to request may also be forwarded for the consideration of the military authorities.

I have, &c.,

His Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos.

G. GREY.

Enclosure 1 in No. 43.

ASSISTANT MILITARY SECRETARY to PRIVATE SECRETARY.

(No. 5058.)

SIR,—

Head Quarters, Auckland, 18th June, 1867.

With reference to your letters of the 29th March, 1st and 2nd April, I have the honor, by direction of the Major-General commanding, to forward for the information of His Excellency the Governor the enclosed duplicate of proceedings of a Court of Inquiry, assembled by the order of the Major-General, to investigate and report on the alleged charges of fraud on the Colony by persons in the service of the Imperial Commissariat; and I am to add that the Major-General will by the next mail forward a copy of these proceedings to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for War, from whom he will await further instructions in the matter.

G. W. DEAN PITT, Lieut.-Colonel,

Private Secretary, Government House, Auckland.

Assistant Military Secretary.

Enclosure 2 in No. 43.

(No. 130.)

MEMORANDUM by the AUDITOR-GENERAL.

I HAVE carefully read over the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry.

The Court releases the Commissariat Department from the imputation of issuing false certificates with intent to defraud.

It is shown, however, that false certificates were issued, and that they were made in some instances from extraordinary carelessness and complete disregard by the Commissariat officers of the usual precautions against mistakes. This particularly appears in the examination of Deputy Assistant Commissary-General Marshall, as explained by himself in evidence, on the 8th June, 1867.

Though it has not been proved that the officers making the false certificates knew them to be false, yet the Queen's revenues were paid away on such certificates. I think, therefore, no attempt should have been made, either on invitation by the Court or by the Commissariat officer in charge (Mr. Ibbotson), to throw blame on the Customs Department for carelessness.

Even if the Customs had had a ready means of detecting a false certificate (which, however, the elaborate returns found necessary for the use of the Court prove would not be the case), yet this would not remove or lessen the culpability of the Commissariat officers. The eagerness to throw blame on the Customs is particularly shewn in the uncalled for allusion by Mr. Ibbotson to the Customs having taken no steps to verify the signatures of the Commissariat officers, when neither a suspicion nor any evidence of forged signatures having been made use of had been brought under the notice of the Court.

CHARLES KNIGHT,

19th July, 1867.

Auditor.

The Military Authorities should be requested to state whether the necessary deductions for over issue of drawbacks have yet been made from the claims of the Contractors.

C. K.

No. 44.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B., to the Right Hon. the Duke of BUCKINGHAM.

(No. 76.)

Government House, Wellington,

MY LORD DUKE,—

6th August, 1867.

1. Parakaia.
2. Hare Hemi Taharapa.
3. Pumipi te Raha.
4. Paranihi te Tau.
5. Rawiri te Wanui.
6. Te Hoia.

I have the honor herewith to transmit, for presentation to the Queen, the Petitions noted in the margin, which have been addressed to Her Majesty by certain members of the Ngatiraukawa Tribe, praying that some person may be sent out from England to investigate the reason why the General Assembly of New Zealand has excluded a block of land at Rangitikei, which they claim, from being subject to the operation of the Native Lands Court, so that their title to this land cannot be judicially investigated. This proceeding of the General Assembly they complain of as an injustice; and they appear to desire that some impartial person should investigate the subject, and, I presume, pronounce on the justice of their claims.

2. I enclose at the same time copies of two Memoranda which I have received from my Responsible Advisers, in which they explain the circumstances connected with this transaction.