

Hon. the Premier. A distinct promise was also made to the Provincial Government that Mr. McLean would, at the earliest possible period, use his personal influence to persuade the Natives to allow the surveys to proceed.

From that time the whole survey work of the block was left under the direction of Mr. Buller, who, acting, we presume, under the directions of the General Government, simply withdrew the survey parties from all those parts of the block where opposition had been offered, was threatened, or was by him supposed likely to arise; and to all the remonstrances of the Provincial authorities against this inaction, the sole reply was that it would be unwise to provoke a breach of the peace, and that Mr. McLean would shortly visit the district.

As time passed on, the Natives, finding that they could obstruct the survey with impunity, opposed the progress of the work in every direction, in one instance destroyed the work which had occupied our party some months, and altogether caused a direct loss of several thousands of pounds to the Province. The Provincial Government, finding that the General Government would take no action to punish the offenders until Mr. McLean should have visited the district, became more and more importunate that Mr. McLean's visit should be made.

At length Mr. McLean visited the district, in the month of November, 1870, at least ten months after the promise of his intervention had been given, but, up to the date of his departure from Wellington, the Provincial Government were not consulted as to the measures to be taken by him, nor were they made aware of the intention to make large gifts of lands, not only to those opposing the survey, but to others who had made no claim upon the Province until after those gifts had been irrevocably made.

The late Provincial Government wish it to be distinctly understood, in reference to this matter, that they recognised that in a question affecting the peaceable relations between the two races, the General Government had a right to control action, for the result of which the Colony would become responsible in case of a rupture. They also felt that the case was one to be dealt with by a strong hand. As a Government they had no power to enforce their legal position, and therefore it was absolutely necessary to secure the aid of the Colonial Government. They believed that this was the view of the case taken up by the General Government, and they recognized that Mr. McLean, as Defence Minister responsible for the peace of the Colony, and as Native Minister responsible for the relations between the two races, was *ex officio* the proper person on whom to place the responsibility of a resort to force, if—as the Provincial Government believed—forcible measures, as in the case of Miritana, were necessary to enable the Province to obtain possession of its property. But no action taken by them can, in their opinion, be interpreted into the appointment of Mr. McLean as an arbitrator between themselves and the Manawatu Natives as to the claims of the latter upon a block of land, the ownership of which had been decided after most careful investigation by the highest tribunal to which the question of title could have been referred.

I have, &c.,

A. FOLLETT HALCOMBE,
Provincial Treasurer.

His Honor the Superintendent, Wellington.

I have submitted this letter to the late Deputy Superintendent, and my late colleagues in the Provincial Executive, and it meets with their approval.

A. F. H.

No. 21.

Mr. C. B. BORLASE to Mr. H. BUNNY.

SIR,—

Wellington, 23rd May, 1871.

With reference to the question of Mr. McLean's right to alienate the lands in the Manawatu, as submitted to me by your minute, I am at a loss to know by what possible title it could be done by any person or body (excepting the General Legislature and the Superintendent and Provincial Council). "The Wellington Land Purchase Act, 1866," defines the boundaries of the block. The money for the land was paid on the security of the Acts of the General Assembly, and of the land in question. The deed of conveyance was signed and properly completed. The Legislature permitted certain disputants to have their claims tried by special Court. Those claims were tried, and finally adjudicated upon by a competent tribunal. The Governor's sanction to that decision was indicated in the Government *Gazette*, and thenceforth it seems to me that the lands became waste lands of the Crown, subject to be dealt with by the Superintendent and Council under the Acts passed by the General Assembly. Although the powers of the General Assembly are great, they would scarcely venture to lessen the security for the loan and rob the Province at the same time. I cannot think that any Government or member of a Government has that right.

I have, &c.,

C. B. BORLASE.

Henry Bunny, Esq., Provincial Secretary.

No. 22.

The Hon. D. McLEAN to Dr. FEATHERSTON.

(No. 450-1.)

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 25th November, 1871.

I herewith enclose, for your Honor's information, the copy of a letter which I addressed to Mr. Carkeek, and of his reply of the 11th instant, reporting on the progress of the survey of Native reserves in the Rangitikei-Manawatu district, and stating that the services of the remainder of the staff would greatly facilitate the definition of the reserve boundaries.

I quite concur in Mr. Carkeek's view, and would be glad if your Honor would authorize the