

asked to go up and settle the matter was sufficient to convince any one that some land would be given away. Still, that point was never put, as to whether these concessions would be allowed, and if made, whether they would be made at the expense of the province or of the colony.

38. When your letter was first drafted, was that impression stated in the draft?—Yes; but that part was removed, because it did not express the opinion of the Provincial Government.

39. When Dr. Featherston returned, did you acquaint him with this impression that had existed on your mind?—I am not aware that I did. I do not believe that I conveyed that impression to either Dr. Featherston or any one else. It was only my impression that some concession would have to be made. That was my individual opinion on the matter. I would ask you to bear this fact in mind: We first asked the General Government to interfere in the month of January, 1870. When we first asked the Government, we had no idea of any concessions having to be made. Ten months afterwards the state of matters which existed in January had gone altogether past, and some kind of concession had become absolutely necessary. When we first asked the General Government, we did not consider that any concession was necessary; and, so far as our actions were concerned, we believed that our responsibility ceased from that time. The matter was thenceforward in the hands of the General Government; and it was the events which took place during those ten months, that produced the impression on my mind that concessions would have to be made.

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TUESDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER, 1873.

Hon. Mr. Fox examined:

40. *Mr. Speaker.*] Will you be good enough to state your recollection of the circumstances attending your negotiations with the Provincial Government?—Mr. Halcombe, in the statement he made yesterday, began by going back: I shall adopt a contrary direction. I will begin by alluding to the interviews with the Provincial Government which took place in connection with these matters. I cannot precisely recollect how many were present at these interviews, and in that respect I am in pretty much the same position as my friend the Deputy Superintendent, he too being unable to recollect who were present at the interviews; neither can I remember particularly all the details of what passed at the interviews which took place between the Deputy Superintendent and myself: but still I recollect all the more salient points connected with the negotiations that took place about the Manawatu Block. For instance, I remember that on the last occasion on which Mr. Taylor was present, he urged in very strong terms the necessity for the General Government to interfere, and give the province possession of the block. I remember using the expression to him, "Do you want us to fight for it?" To that remark Mr. Taylor replied, "Of course not; I do not go the extreme length of Mr. Brandon; only we want Mr. McLean himself to go up and do it." I acquiesced in the propriety of Mr. McLean going up to Manawatu; and, so far as I was at liberty to do so, I agreed that he should go up when he could find time. I had no doubt at all but that Mr. McLean would do it. I think there was an expression used at the time, to the effect that the Provincial Government must have some patience, and not be in too great a hurry. I thought that there was an inclination on their part to support their surveyors in a way that was calculated to lead to fresh conflict. Now I can safely say that during the whole of these interviews which I had with all or any of the parties, there was nothing further from my mind than that the General Government should be held liable for the cost of putting the province in possession. Such an idea was never broached. Nor did I hear any one say anything to that effect until I heard it from Dr. Featherston, after his return from England. Some weeks elapsed between the time of the settlement having been made by Mr. McLean and the first time this question of compensation to the province was raised, and I heard nothing whatever about it in the interval. If my memory serves me right, when the transaction occurred, the Provincial Council was sitting; but I do not recollect anything having been said there. The claim, I think, was not suggested then, and it was not until Dr. Featherston arrived that I heard anything upon the subject. I have now told you all that took place, to the best of my recollection, between these gentlemen and myself. You have in Mr. Gisborne's letter of 10th February, 1871, the substance of my recollections on the point. That letter was written after a conference between Mr. Gisborne and myself. The letter was written principally by Mr. Gisborne, but I added one or two paragraphs which I thought necessary. I do not go beyond what appears in that letter. I will now recount one or two transactions which took place of earlier date, one of which was referred to by Mr. Halcombe. He infers liability, if I understand him right, on the part of the General Government, in reference to the non-possession by the Provincial Government, from the fact that the General Government made itself responsible by the action it took in the case of Miritana. The view he gave of that case was one which was currently entertained at the time, both by the newspapers and ordinary reports, in reference to the part I took in that transaction. It was reported that I myself initiated Miritana's arrest, and that Mr. Buller acted under my instructions. In that respect Mr. Halcombe shows that he is not aware of the real facts of the case; and when I explain them, he will see that the facts are exactly the other way. I had been up the Wanganui River, or on a visit to the Patea country, I am not sure which, and on returning to Wanganui I went to Mr. Buller's house late in the evening. He informed me of the warrant he had issued some days before against Miritana, and of the failure to execute it. He also informed me of his intention to go next day himself and enforce the warrant of commitment. He explained to me all the