

1882.
NEW ZEALAND.

WEST COAST NATIVE AFFAIRS

(FURTHER PAPERS RESPECTING).

[In Continuation of A.-8A.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The PREMIER to His Excellency the ADMINISTRATOR.

Memorandum for His Excellency.

MINISTERS present their respectful compliments to the Administrator of the Government; and submit for His Excellency's approval, the accompanying Proclamation respecting past proceedings relative to Native affairs on the west coast of the North Island, the present attitude of certain Natives there, and the position which the Government now feel bound to take in the matter.

2. The reasons which induce Ministers to recommend the issue of the Proclamation are stated in that document.

3. Ministers desire to add, that they believe the proposed step has become unavoidable through the continued refusal of Te Whiti and his adherents to listen to any proposals for a pacific settlement of outstanding difficulties—the threatening language recently used by Te Whiti—and the aggressive attitude assumed by the Natives assembled at Parihaka from various parts of the colony. Those Natives have congregated in large numbers on land which they have been warned they would not be allowed to occupy: they have erected fences upon such land: and a collision has been avoided only because the Government have forbore, up to the present time, to interfere with the illegal proceedings of those men. Still more recently, they have, in large numbers, interfered with settlers occupying lands purchased from the Government: they have forced a stoppage of work which was being carried on, have pulled down fences, and have ordered the settlers off the ground.

4. The hope was entertained that the speech to be made by Te Whiti at the late monthly meeting at Parihaka would have given some reason for believing that a more reasonable view was being taken by him; but that hope has been disappointed. The Natives are daily becoming more bold in aggression and in resistance to the law; and the apprehension and excitement amongst the settlers have been constantly increasing. The Government have been compelled, at great expense, to add to the strength of the forces on the coast; and, altogether, the matter has now become so pressing, that, in the opinion of Ministers, the issue of this Proclamation is urgently and pressingly necessary.

Wellington, October 19th, 1881.

JOHN HALL.

Enclosure.

Administrator of the Government.

A PROCLAMATION.

FOR nearly two years past, the Government has been endeavouring to bring about a satisfactory conclusion of difficulties on the West Coast of the North Island, and to affect such a settlement of the lands as would enable Europeans and Maoris to live together in peace. In January, 1880, a Royal Commission was appointed, in accordance with the will of Parliament, to inquire into any claims and grievances which might exist on the part of the Natives in reference to such lands, so that just grounds of complaint might be removed and peace be firmly established.

Governor Sir Hercules Robinson, in his Proclamation announcing the appointment of this Commission, said that the confusion then existing could not be allowed to continue, and he called, in the name of the Queen, on all her subjects to assist him in bringing about friendly relations between the two races.

The Commissioners proceeded to make their inquiries. They recommended setting aside for the Natives a fair and suitable portion of the land, to be given to them on condition of their loyally

Gazette,
No. 83, p. 1299.

accepting the proposals of the Government, and living according to law upon the lands so allotted to them.

Parliament approved of the proposals of the Commissioners, and the Government has taken steps to give effect to them in the case of those Natives who frankly accept them. Some have already received Crown grants for the land allotted to them.

Te Whiti, and those who chose to obey his word, have held aloof from this work. They have persistently neglected and caused others to neglect the opportunity offered to them, and have repeatedly rejected proposals made with the hope of a settlement.

Mr. Parris was sent to explain to them the desire of the Government for an amicable settlement. Te Whiti would not hear him, or allow his people to listen to Mr. Parris's words.

Governor Sir Arthur Gordon himself sent to invite Te Whiti to meet him; Te Whiti rejected the invitation.

Lastly, he refused to listen to proposals made in person by a Minister of the Crown, and did so in a manner which could leave no doubt as to his intention to resist the law.

His action has done great wrong to his own people, as well as to the colony generally. Through his words, numbers of Natives are kept back from obtaining lands which would otherwise be given to them; and numbers of strangers, who never had any interest in the lands at Parihaka, are being brought to Parihaka to the detriment of the people of that place.

Month after month, Natives are assembled from a distance. They are making themselves poor by contributing to useless expenditure upon feasts which take them away from their own homes; and they are led to neglect the cultivation of their own lands. At these meetings, Te Whiti has spoken in such a way as to turn aside the people from listening to the proposals of the Government, and the sound of his voice has unsettled the minds of the people. Recently his words were such as to promote angry feelings and incite open resistance to the law.

This was followed, in defiance of the law, and in spite of warnings by officers of the Government, by the erection of fences on land not set apart for Natives; and by Te Whiti's orders his followers assembled in such numbers and under such circumstances as plainly to show their determination to resist the law when the fences should be removed by order of the Government. Thus a great wrong is being done to Natives as well as Europeans, and the confusion which the Governor said must cease is still prevailing.

The language used by Te Whiti, and the threatening attitude assumed by his followers, have caused apprehensions among the settlers, and compelled the Government to incur great expense and to increase largely the numbers of the Armed Constabulary.

The Commissioners rightly said, "A time must come when the offers and promises of the Crown must either be accepted or refused once for all. No one would pretend that Te Whiti may on his part keep the whole country-side in turmoil and danger as long as he likes, and that the Government on its side must be ready to redeem its promises whenever he chooses. If the Native people are to have the promises fulfilled, the English settlers must have some guarantee that they too shall have done with this long suspense, and may live on their land in security and peace." These were the words of the Commissioners; and the time has come for their fulfilment.

Te Whiti and his adherents must now accept the proposals of the Government, or all that they might now have under these proposals will be beyond their reach.

In the Parihaka Block, 25,000 acres on the Mountain side of the road are, as recommended by the Commissioners, offered as an ample provision for the Parihaka people, besides other reserves on the seaward side of the road. About the latter, the Government has said that it was willing to consider the wishes the Natives might lay before it. The Government now states plainly that these offers will, after fourteen days, be withdrawn, unless, within that time, Te Whiti and his adherents signify their acceptance of them, and their willingness to submit to the law of the Queen and to bring their claims before the Commission. If they do so, the recommendations of the Commissioners, and the promises made, will be liberally interpreted and fulfilled. Should the Natives be so infatuated as to disregard this warning, the Government will proceed to make roads throughout the Parihaka Block, and to lay off lands for European occupation inland of the main road.

The claims of such Natives, under previous promises, will then have passed away, and none of them will be allowed to occupy lands in defiance of the law.

The Queen and the law must be supreme at Parihaka as well as elsewhere. Te Whiti and his people are now called upon to accept the proposals made to them, which would give large and ample reserves to the people. If they do not do this, they alone will be responsible for the passing away from them for ever of the lands which are still proffered by the Government, and for the great evil which must fall on them.

In conclusion, the Maoris residing on the West Coast who wish to live at peace with the Europeans are earnestly requested to listen to a word of great import to them:

Te Whiti and those who adhere to him have hitherto refused to listen to the proposals which have been made by the Government, and, at Te Whiti's instance, numbers of Natives are keeping aloof from the work of peace. The word of the Government now is, that those who wish to accept the offers which have been made, should leave Te Whiti, if he neglects the final opportunity now offered to him. They should go to those lands which have been set aside for them. All visitors should return to their homes, in order that they might not be involved with those who are working confusion, and may not suffer with them. If this warning is neglected, who can distinguish between those who desire peace and those whose work leads to disaster? The innocent and the guilty may suffer together, and this is not the desire of the Government.

Given under the hand of His Excellency Sir James Prendergast, Chief Justice, the Administrator of the Government of Her Majesty's Colony of New Zealand; and issued under the Seal of the said Colony, at the Government House, at Wellington, this day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one.

WM. ROLLESTON.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!