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The Land Question of Taranaki

Frederick A. Carrington

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THE
LAND QUESTION
OF
TARANAKI,

WITH
SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE CONDITION
OF THE
ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS,
AND
DEVELOPING THE RESOURCES
OF
NEW ZEALAND.

BY
F. A. CARRINGTON

TARANAKI:
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[Text]

LAND QUESTION OF TARANAKI, &c.

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New Plymouth, Taranaki,
January, 1860.

MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW-COLONISTS, –

The remarks which I so frequently hear respecting the little progress made in this Province, when compared with other parts of the Colony, cannot be otherwise than disquieting to me, and, as the sole responsibility of selecting a site for this settlement devolved upon myself, is it not natural that I should feel deeply interested in its advancement? What, therefore, must be my feelings when, after an absence of fourteen years, I return and find that I have not only cause to lament the blight cast upon my professional reputation from the withholding the district I selected, the injury inflicted on my pecuniary interest by the withdrawal of the Land Purchase Commissioner at the very time he was about to close the final purchase of the district, in which I had chosen land for myself; – but I have to deplore a policy which has thrown a community into grievous perplexity and entailed irretrievable waste.

How often have I bewailed that it should ever have fallen to my lot to select a settlement where the policy has been so to restrict and circumscribe the amount of land that people are forced from the district, and increased families are compelled to seek more genial homes in other settlements!

Who, with a feeling heart and Christian principle, can witness or be aware of the state of society existing in this Province, and yet remain apathetic and indifferent to the pangs of affectionate dissevered families, the prostration to enterprise, the prohibition to the use of the fertile waste unoccupied land, and the careworn countenance and premature old age depicted in the bearing of the unremunerated forest farmer?

Who, with any regard to the feelings of civilization, decency, or morality, can remain inert and not urge upon Government the desire to ameliorate the "debased social habits" and "low condition" of the Aborigines of this Province?

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Here we have a body of people who have left home and friends and embarked their all in this the most distant British Colony, (a lovely, salubrious, and fertile district embracing more than two millions of acres, and larger than the four English Counties of Kent, Surrey, Middlesex, and Hertford, where dwell, in a barbarous state, located in spots on the margin of the coast, an aboriginal population of one thousand seven hundred and eighty two,¹ who, with the exception of some fifty or sixty, had abandoned this country, and, through fear of an implacable enemy, would never have returned, but for the colonisation of the district;) yet here we are so pent up, restricted, and circumscribed for land, though environed by such an immense tract of fertile waste and unoccupied country, that the Government declare they are unable to give to myself and others a few hundred acres of available ground, for which we paid our money to the Plymouth New Zealand Company nineteen years ago!

Is it not lamentable to know that, not only are outstanding obligations passed over from year to year, to the cost of provident provision for declining years and helpless dependents, but that we should be doomed to so small a quantity of available land that settlers are forced to sacrifice, to a great extent, the natural increase of flocks and herds, and growing families are obliged to separate and yield their strength to other settlements?

Is it not obdurate and impolitic to pursue a course which, after nineteen years' trial and experience, is found to be not only baneful to an aboriginal population, but detrimental to a civilized community?

Is it not grievous to see noxious weeds of the most hurtful nature to man and beast spreading over the face of a beautiful and fertile tract of country, to the cost and injury of civilized man, through the

perverseness, avarice, and indolence of a few rude, retrograding aborigines? Is it not hopeless, is it not a delusion to imagine that we can civilize or moralize the Aborigines of this place while they are allowed to huddle in wigwam whares, and squalid paha – the children frequently in a state of nudity, the adults immodestly clothed in filthy garments?

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Is it not subverting the Divine Command by allowing a fruitful land to remain in barrenness through the obstinacy and wickedness of them that dwell therein?

Is it not incumbent upon us to use every lawful and proper means to induce the Governor of this Colony to make a true and faithful representation to the Colonial Minister of the deplorable state of matters in this settlement?

And now let me remark that in reading Livingstone's Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa, page 352, I observed the following passage: – "The Aborigines all acknowledge that the untilled land, not needed for pasturage, belongs to God alone."

I have also by me the following recorded words of that preeminent statesman and distinguished nobleman, Lord Stanley, which he addressed to the Assembly at the Annual Show of the Manchester and Liverpool Agricultural Society in 1855. I now transcribe them: –

"One could sympathize with the feelings of a man who was reluctant to part with any portion of land he had once called his own; but personal feelings must give way to national necessities, and he did not hesitate to say that, whether consciously or unconsciously, any man was a wrong-doer as regarded the community who retained the ownership of land which he had not the power to improve, but which he had the power to sell. The community had a right to say, either use your property profitably yourself or let others use it for you."

When musing on the matters alluded to in the paragraphs of this epistle, I have, from time to time, submitted to His Excellency the Governor of this Colony, for his information and transmission to England, the letters which I now publish, and my prayer is that they may be aided and be a means, through the Colonial Minister, of alleviating and ameliorating the condition of the Colonists and Aborigines, opening communication and developing the hidden resources, not only of this Province, but of the whole Colony.

I am,
My Friends and Fellow-Colonists,
Yours sincerely,

Copy of a Letter and Statement, in reference to the Land Question of New Plymouth, sent to Governor Gore Browne, with other representations, on the 21st September, 1857.

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New Plymouth, Taranaki,
15th, October, 1841.

SIR, –

I have this morning read in the New Zealand Gazette of the 11th of September a copy of a letter and Government notice, forwarded by His Excellency Governor Hobson to William Wakefield, Esquire, bearing date 5th September, 1841. I am not a little grieved to find that one of these notices will militate most seriously against this settlement, and will, if enforced, blast all hope for the colonists. I therefore lose not a moment in informing you of the position in which we are now placed, and hope you will, with the least possible delay, communicate with His Excellency, praying that the said notice may be cancelled.

The boundary line which the Governor has been pleased to order for this settlement excludes the most valuable and, indeed, the very piece of country which was the cause of my giving preference to this part of the New Zealand Company's land. I told Colonel Wakefield at the time I chose this place that I intended fixing the town at the River Waitara; but from unforeseen causes, I was obliged to place it where it is, about two miles east of the Sugar Loaves, and ten miles west of the Waitara. If we are deprived of this river, we lose the only harbour we have for small craft, and also the most valuable district for agriculture; in lieu of which we shall have a dense forest which will require much capital, time, and labour to clear. Forest timber comes within a quarter of a mile of the town (boundary), runs parallel with the shore for a few miles, then gradually bears away inland, and opens out the district of country round the Waitara, where I intended to lay out the majority of the sections, – in fact I am now cutting a base line from this place to that river, for the express purpose of so doing.

The ground I have as yet been over in the forest is in many places so contorted and broken as to render it almost next to useless. This, together with the great mass of sand, which in places runs inland for a mile or so, will prove a serious loss to some party, and, I fear, will cause litigation, as all land sold by the Plymouth Company was warranted available, and their stipulation with the London Company was that I should be at liberty to reject all unavailable land: the contorted ground and barren sand, which will scarcely yield a blade of grass, is certainly unavailable.

I trust that you will make His Excellency acquainted with these facts, and point out what an extremely hard case it would be to compel the present land owners to take their sections in the forest when there is such an immense district of available land which can be cleared with comparative trifling expense.

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The Plymouth settlement not having a harbour for shipping must necessarily have many additional expenses on all imports and exports, and, unless the land can be easily cultivated in the onset, no one will remain here.

Should this place prosper, in the course of a few years there will be many inhabitants in the town, and then the agriculturists will be able to clear the forest land at a trifling expense, as there will then be a great demand for timber and firewood; but to attempt to clear these woodlands before these demands are would prove ruinous to all small capitalists.

I close this letter entreating that you will submit for His Excellency's consideration the subject herein contained. If we are deprived of the Waitara district, and are obliged to cultivate the almost impenetrable forest, I, in this case, see no hope for this settlement. If, on the other hand, we are permitted to retain the Waitara land we shall flourish.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
FRED. A. CARRINGTON.

Captain Liardet, R. N.,
Agent of the Plymouth Company of New Zealand,
New Plymouth.

Immediately on the receipt of the above letter Captain Liardet determined to see Governor Hobson or Colonel Wakefield on the subject. On the 21st of the same month he left this place for Port Nicholson; he returned here on the 4th of November; and on the 24th of the same month he requested me to send a surveying party to cut the bounday line, some four miles on the other side of the Waitara and at right angles to the coast line, as sanctioned by Governor Hobson.

On the 25th of November, 1841, a surveying party started from New Plymouth town and commenced the cutting of the said boundary line in conformity with the Governor's authority.

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Subsequently I surveyed and staked out 214 sections, 10,700 acres, on the North side of the river Waitara.²

FRED. A. CARRINGTON.

New Plymouth,
29th October, 1858.

SIR, –

In July last, when I was in Auckland, I did myself the honor of calling on your Excellency. I requested your consideration in reference to the distress which prevailed in this settlement for the want of available land, and I told your Excellency that although I had virtually purchased land from the Plymouth Company of

New Zealand more than eighteen years since, that I had not obtained an acre to locate myself upon. At the same time, I mentioned to your Excellency that I had written a letter which I intended to forward to the Earl Shaftesbury. The remark you made, and the kind feeling you expressed, together with the sympathy shown by the Colonial Secretary and Treasurer, to whom I had submitted the matter, induced me to keep back my letter; but, as I have reason to fear that the time of myself and many others in this Province is passing away in an anxious and unprofitable expectancy, you will, I trust, pardon me for again urging a cause which I consider incumbent on me to advocate by every proper means in my power. I therefore beg the favour of your perusal of the enclosed letter, transcribed from that which I intended to have sent to the Earl Shaftesbury; and I fervently hope it may receive your Excellency's dispassionate consideration and representation to the Colonial Minister which the subject deserves.

I have the honor to be,
Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,
FRED. A. CARRINGTON.
His Excellency Colonel Gore Browne, C. B.,
Governor of New Zealand, &c., &c., &c.,
Auckland.

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Private Secretary's Office,
4th November, 1858.

SIR,

I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th October, covering copy of a letter from you to the Right Honorable the Earl of Shaftesbury, with its enclosures.

I have the honor to be,
Your most obedient servant,
F. G. STEWARD,
Private Secretary.
F. A. Carrington, Esq., &c., &c.,
New Plymouth.

New Plymouth, New Zealand,
12th July, 1858.

MY LORD, –

The conflicting circumstances in which this settlement is involved, the general depression pervading the whole community, the contention, anarchy, and bloodshed imbittering and curtailing the lives of many of the natives, the fertility and salubrity of the soil and climate, the facile and practical means of ameliorating and averting the various evils I have named, combined with the pleasing and gratifying duty of assisting the deserving, aiding the enterprising, and bringing into use the elements bestowed by an All Wise and All Merciful Creator for the benefit and advantage of our fellow-creatures, induces me to address a letter to your Lordship. Notwithstanding I have already placed before His Excellency the Governor of this Colony a letter bearing on this subject, as written by me to Mr. George Frederic Young, formerly M. P. and Director of the New Zealand Company, in the hope of its being submitted for consideration to the Colonial Minister, a portion of which letter is herewith transcribed, – the importance and urgency of the matter in question convince me that I ought to address your Lordship, because I feel confident that your position, eloquence, and kindness of heart will impel you to use your influence in

that quarter from whence alone the authority must come to grant the boon so earnestly desired by all who are interested in the prosperity of this place and people, and of the colonisation and development of New Zealand generally.

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Preluding, I would observe that, in 1840, after nearly fifteen years' service in the Ordnance Survey Department, at the solicitation of the Directors of the Plymouth Company of New Zealand and under the advice of the late Lord Vivian, the then Master-General of the Ordnance, who was one of the Directors of the Plymouth Company, I was induced to leave my office in the Ordnance Department and accept the appointment of Chief Surveyor of a settlement about to be formed in this country. I arrived in New Zealand in December of that year, and, after conferring with Colonel Wakefield, the agent of the New Zealand Company, and having explored several hundred miles of the coast of the Northern and Middle Islands, I finally selected the Taranaki district, now known as New Plymouth, for the Company's settlement. Prior to this, however, agents of the New Zealand Company landed on the coast and treated with the resident aboriginal inhabitants – the only people then occupying the country – agreed with them as to price, and paid them in part for the land.

When first I visited this part of New Zealand there were not more than some fifty or sixty natives throughout the district. These few dejected beings were living immediately on the shore close to the Sugar Loaf Islands, so that they might be ever ready to flee to these rocky islets from the impending danger with which they were incessantly threatened by their implacable enemies, the Waikatos; they existed upon fern-root and fish, without garden or plantation of any kind, and their clothing was in keeping with their servile wretchedness. No sooner had they learned, through an interpreter, the object of my visit, than in speeches and gesture I was importuned to bring white people and dwell among them; the whole district was abandoned – they invited me to take it, so that they might be protected from their dreaded enemies, the Waikatos, who, some eight years before, under Te Whero-where, a leading chief, had barbarously tortured and slaughtered, dispersed and carried away captive the greater portion of these, the Ngatiawa people. So great was the slaughter, dispersion, and captivity of these people, that, after eight years had elapsed, only some fifty or sixty of them had returned to a point on the coast where, by nature, they could at all times be secure from surprise.

At the time of my first arrival this beautiful and inviting country was densely clothed with luxuriant vegetation, without road or path

in any direction; the whole country was in abeyance, the Waikatos jealously watching, and the Ngatiawas, except the few I have named, not venturing to occupy the land.

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A few weeks after my coast exploration I returned here and commenced the survey of the settlement, when I was solicited by the natives for some presents, which they alleged were promised them, as the ratification of the purchase made by the agents of the New Zealand Company, whenever white people came to settle here. On the 8th of March, 1841, I wrote to Colonel Wakefield, requesting the fulfilment of the promise; he replied to my letter, and sent in the schooner "Jewess" certain bales of goods, which vessel and goods were lost in Cook's Strait, off the Island of Kapiti.

Quickly it became known to the Waikatos that white people were settling in this part of New Zealand, then some two hundred of them made a descent on the country, put forth their claim to the land, and, in the name of their chief, threatened to occupy it. This threat was averted by Governor Hobson purchasing from them their rights and claims to this territory.

Since then, from time to time, those dispersed, manumitted, captive Ngatiawas have been returning, and, notwithstanding the contract made by the agents of the New Zealand Company with the resident natives, the abeyance of the country until occupied by white people, the purchase made by Governor Hobson from the Waikatos, the surveying of the settlement and the selection and occupation of the land by the settlers under the Governor's sanction and Proclamation, and, finally, the award of the land made by her Majesty's Commissioner of Land Claims (Mr. Spain), mistaken, biased, and delusive representations, without consideration, sympathy, or feeling for the colonists, induced Governor FitzRoy to forego inquiry (and having myself left the settlement a few months before and returned to England, the Governor was not informed that the land was in abeyance and would have remained abandoned unless occupied by the enterprising settler, nor was he acquainted with the solicitations of the natives for me to take the land for white people, so that they might be protected from their enemies, the Waikatos), and disregarding every existing contract and obligation, and setting at defiance Proclamation, opinions, claims, and award, he arbitrarily asserted the conquered, dispersed, captive Ngatiawa tribe to be the owners of the soil, thereby placing the native in a position he could not have held without the colonist, inflicting harsh and summary injustice upon the innocent emigrant, ousting and distressing the poor occupant settler, retarding the prosperity of a thriving community, and pa-

ralysing one of the most noble works of man – the colonisation of fertile waste and heathen land.

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The natives of this settlement have received every advantage and consideration; – the arts and civilization have been introduced among them; they have been instructed and supplied with all the requirements in husbandry, and are exempt from local taxation; yet gratitude is unknown to them, and their demeanour betokens that the time has arrived for Government interference and inquiry into their doubtful claim to land which they now pollute with blood.

While matters are allowed to remain as they are, it is hopeless for the people of this settlement to think of extricating themselves from the difficulties which surround them. Hampered and debarred from extending their tillage, and distressed and perplexed for extension of pasture, they have been obliged to sacrifice all that should have been unto them as an increase and comfort for their families, so much so that at the present time it is with difficulty interest is paid by many, who have mortgaged their all.

It is distressing to hear from the lips of the settlers in every direction, expressions of disappointment, anxiety, and regret at the cruel and unjust fate which forces them into the broken ground of the almost impenetrable forest, to combat and exhaust their strength, impair their health, and shorten their days in clearing rugged and contorted woodlands, from which nothing but sorrow and loss (with few exceptions) have hitherto been reaped. All this depression, grief, and sadness of heart is caused in consequence of the settlers not being allowed to cultivate any portion of the great fertile district now lying waste. The petty native feuds and quarrels preclude all hope of acquiring any of this land at present, and the Government not having any available land for sale in this part of New Zealand, and the settlers having outgrown the restricted and circumscribed little spot of available ground (some ten thousand acres) upon which they have been forced to locate themselves, the forest proving ruinous to all who attempt its cultivation, it is quite clear that extension, commerce, and prosperity can not be the happy lot of this settlement unless some humane and noble-minded steps be taken, alike auspicious for native and European, to bring into use the fertile waste land of this province.

The pecuniary losses and domestic depression, now felt in the once sanguine household and happy homestead, are greatly enhanced since experience has proved that it is utter ruin to persist in the clearing of these sylvan abodes without population, which would create a market and give a return for timber and firewood.

The prolific increase of flocks and herds, which in other settlements is the harbinger of joy to all who are engaged in pastoral life, is here regarded with anxious forebodings. The wherewithal are increased flocks and herds to be sustained, is ever pressing on the minds of husbandmen.

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Many a sad and heavy sigh has been breathed in my presence by parents when speaking of the separation which inevitably must take place between themselves and children, if the policy which has hitherto governed this place is still to be regarded as immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians.

The desideratum, the great highway from Auckland, via New Plymouth, to Wellington, would, in my opinion, do more towards civilising the natives and alleviating the anxiety of New Plymouth settlers than all that legislation is likely to effect in the dissociated communities of New Zealand.

The picture portrayed of this settlement is sad indeed, yet it is doubly aggravated from the fact of its being one of the finest districts in New Zealand. It is decidedly the most beautiful part of the country that I have seen; and since I have visited Upper and Lower Canada, different parts of the United States, Central and South America, several of the West India Islands, Mexico, California, and part of the Continent of Europe, and having a thorough knowledge of the greater part of the British Isles and made finished drawings of more than eight thousand square miles of the hills for Government, and my profession and experience enabling me to give an opinion on country, I think it right to state that a large portion of the Province of New Plymouth is more inviting for happy settlement than other lands which I have seen. Though insignificant when compared with the great Continental tracts, its salubrity and geographical position render it important that it should not remain waste.

Here there are some seven or eight hundred thousand acres of valuable farming land totally unoccupied, producing nothing but that which is indigenous to the soil (except noxious weeds, which have been introduced from home), and from which no return whatever is obtained by the natives, which could be brought into cultivation at a comparatively trifling cost. This fertile and valuable piece of country is permitted to lie dormant because the remnant of a once populous tribe (numbering from the last statistics, in 1856,³ one thousand seven hundred and eighty two throughout this Province) have, through delusive representations, mistaken philanthropy, and cruel

policy, been admitted and continue to be acknowledged the owners of the soil. This admission and acknowledgment is now generating and aiding savage, sanguinary, and deplorable results. The chiefs, with few exceptions degraded savages, are jealous of each other in every transaction regarding the payment made by Government for the land, and in many instances there are contending parties for the same piece of ground; hence it follows that these poor ignorant beings become exasperated with each other, and deeds of blood and murder and the most revolting acts have ensued from this, the present mode of acquiring land in this

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settlement. It is lamentable that matters should be allowed to continue in this state, and I fear there is but little chance of amendment until the Home Government be persuaded what the Maori character and claim in this settlement really are. Then, and not until then, will the Governor of this colony receive instructions which will for ever put a stop to atrocities and anarchy among the natives in this Province. Blessed, indeed, will be the day for the aborigines of this place, and, in fact, for the whole colony, when Government take into their own hands the management and control of all waste land. I would strongly represent to your Lordship the cruel and unchristian policy of the present system of purchasing land from the natives in this settlement, – cruel and unchristian I say, because the Maori is naturally a greedy and jealous being; for, although every effort and endeavour may be made to inquire into the claims of these people to land they are about to sell, and although sound wisdom, discretion, and strict impartiality may be exercised in the payment, yet feuds will arise, because there are so many claimants to the same piece of ground. We shall have neither peace nor prosperity, but contention and bloodshed, until Government have at their disposal all waste land in this part of New Zealand.

The "Treaty of Waitangi" has been and is the incubus of New Zealand, but in no part has it operated with such baneful results, both to native and European, as in this Province. It is a delusion and fallacy to imagine that any of the natives in this part of the country ever heard of such a treaty till years after it was made.

Reviewing the past, and calling to mind the number of lives which have been sacrificed at different times, invariably on account of the waste lands, is it not to be deplored that the tongue and pen of good and learned men should have been exercised and wielded in upholding a cause, which, upon calm reflection, and an ordinary share of penetration in human events, must have told them that they were consulting their piety and philanthropy as little as their judgment by their advocacy of that which was manifestly unjust to the enterprising settler,

useless to the native, and a sure and certain means of retarding colonisation, civilization, and the diffusion of the Gospel.

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Far be it from me to wrong or oppress the native in any way; but when I consider the barbarous and treacherous acts which have taken place between the natives in this settlement within the last three or four years, and the premeditated cold-blooded murders, committed with impunity in open day, in the presence of the English settler, – the anarchy, contention, and dastardly warfare destroying the natives and injuring the colonists, I should fail in my duty as a man, as a Christian and Englishman, if I did not urge all in my power the interference of Government to put a stop to a continuance of such deeds of horror.

For several months past, and within ten miles of the town, the natives have been engaged in a war of revenge; the leading man or chief of one party having murdered and mutilated friends of the other party – the latter in like manner having in the first instance murdered friends of the other. The difference arose in our treating for land which both parties claimed; hence the war. The strongest section have been endeavouring to starve to capitulation the weakest; and had they succeeded, it was their intention to murder every man, woman, and child, – the leading man or chief was to have been put to death by being repeatedly drawn across a fire until life was extinct. Some of the most active in these deeds of strife and fiendish ideas were native stipendiary magistrates. Surely these things ought not to be, nor should these lawless beings be allowed to set at defiance all order, decency, and respect for our laws and civilization, if this province is to be regarded as an appendage of the Crown. A hollow truce or stratagem has for a time put a stop to these disgraceful scenes in this isolated settlement of New Zealand.

So many opinions and statements have been expressed and written concerning the natives and purchase of this place, that if, in the following remarks I am about to make upon the "Pastoral Letter" addressed by the Bishop of New Zealand to the members of the Church of England in the settlement of New Plymouth, dated 30th August, 1855, which, within the last few days, I have seen for the first time, any expressions should fall from me differing in knowledge of fact or opinion from that expressed by his Lordship, I trust, if it meets his Lordship's eye, that he will feel as little offended with me as I am with him. Therefore, without further preamble, I will briefly quote and comment on a few of the paragraphs contained in the letter, in the hope of removing the prejudicial inferences conveyed by the epistle, which was evidently penned under certain erroneous impressions.

Page 3. – The Bishop writes: "It has always been my lot to be accused of opposing the interests of my own countrymen in the settlements of the New Zealand Company, by supporting the claims of the native inhabitants. The root of all this appearance of opposition (for I deny that it was real) lay in the fact, that the agents of the New Zealand Company, while they recognized, by partial acts of purchase, the right of the natives to the land, did not sufficiently investigate the titles, and therefore failed to extinguish them."

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I admit that if the agent or agents of the New Zealand Company had paid the Waikatos for their claim to the New Plymouth land, and told me when I first came here this fact – "certain payments were promised to the resident natives whenever white people settled in Taranaki," I should have provided myself with the promised presents or an equivalent, and given them on arrival, and thereby avoided the annoyances I subsequently encountered for this breach of faith. All the difficulty that I ever experienced from the natives, up to the time of my departure for England in August, 1843, was caused by the nonpayment to the Waikatos and the non-fulfilment of the promised presents to the natives here. I cannot now bring to mind any one instance of the natives telling me that they would not sell the land; payment was all that was required. Now, since Governor Hobson paid the Waikatos for their rights and claims to this land, and subsequent payments have been made to the natives here, infinitely more than equivalent to the non-fulfilment of the promised presents, and bearing in mind that the country was abandoned, and would not and could not have been occupied by the natives without the presence of the settlers, and that it is solely on account of the increased value given to the district by colonisation, at the risk and toil of the enterprising and industrious settler, which causes the native to withhold the land, through avaricious and exorbitant demands, – I venture to say, if the facts adduced in this letter be clearly submitted to the Law Advisers of the Crown, the opinion will be, legally and equitably, that the land does not belong to the natives who now defile and retain it as a wilderness – it is Crown land.

Had payment been made to the Waikatos, and the promised presents given to the Ngatiawas, I feel confident we should not have had any disturbance. The proposed reserves of one-tenth of the land would have been, in round numbers, for the whole of this Province, two hundred and seventeen thousand acres, which, if judiciously allotted, would not only have satisfied these people, but it would have been a more certain means than the present system of reclaiming them from

their heathen ways, and we should now have possessed a large extent of fertile waste land, which a willing, zealous, and numerous population would have rapidly brought into cultivation, and shown the aborigines, by industry and example, that one tenth of Taranaki making returns would be of infinite more value than the whole of New Zealand in a primitive state.

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Page 3, line 12. – "A transaction which was supposed to give to two or three thousand Englishmen an absolute right to dispossess seven thousand armed New Zealanders, was concluded within a space of time in which no honest conveyancer would undertake to draw a marriage settlement upon an encumbered estate."

Any one reading the above statement would suppose that there were really seven thousand armed natives offering resistance on the land which the New Zealand Company claimed for the New Plymouth settlement. The truth is, when I first came here there were not any natives in occupation of the land, and not more than fifty or sixty in the whole country, who importuned me to bring white people to settle on the land, and who, in a most abject state, were existing on the coast close to the Sugar Loaf Islands. The New Zealand Company claimed for their settlement of New Plymouth sixty thousand acres. The Government statistics, taken in 1856,

show that there are now, after all who have returned, only one thousand seven hundred and eighty two natives in the whole of the New Plymouth Province,⁴ which embraces an area of two million one hundred and seventy six thousand acres. To make this statement still more clear I give the following comparative fact: – The Province of New Plymouth is larger in extent than the four English Counties of Kent, Surrey, Middlesex, and Hertford, and the sum total of all the native population in the whole Province is one thousand seven hundred and eighty two! In other words, the native population of the Province of New Plymouth is not more than the population of one of our English villages, and the acres of land they hold, in a useless state, is more than is contained in four English Counties!

Page 3, line 20. – "If the purchases had been conducted with more deliberation, over small blocks of land, and with the consent of all the owners, there is reason to believe that the colonists would have remained undisturbed, as the purchases of private settlers have almost in every instance, been sustained by the testimony of the native vendors."

This suggestion was a thing impossible; there were not any inhabitants in the country at the time, excepting the few who were wretchedly existing on the coast, close to the Sugar Loaf Islands. It

was not until after the white people had settled on the land that the natives ventured to return to this district, and occupy small patches of ground, and claim the country.

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Page 4, line 31. – In comparing the Province of New Plymouth with that of Auckland, the Bishop writes: "The coasting craft and canoes of that Provinca are here represented by the almost innumerable carts, which may be seen on market days coming from north and south into the settlement."

In justice to the industrious colonist it should also have been stated that these carts (possibly fifty in the whole Province are occasionally employed in bringing marketable produce to the settlers,) travel over roads made entirely at the cost of the settler; that in the rainy season they greatly cut up and injure these thoroughfares, and impose an increased taxation and heavy burthen upon the white man, to which they do not contribute one farthing, nor will they render any assistance in repairing the roads they so much injure.

Page 5, line 3. – "Surely, then, it is as unjust as it is impolitic to grudge to an industrious people the possession of land which they have shown themselves so able and willing to cultivate; and to look with an evil eye upon the places which remain waste."

This is so contrary to all that I have witnessed and know of the natives of this Province that I cannot account for the statement otherwise than by supposing that Bishop Selwyn was thinking of the native population of some oasis in the wastes of New Zealand. O that the natives of this settlement were an industrious people and willing to cultivate the soil! then should we not have occasion to deplore the disgraceful scenes which have been enacted by them during the last four years; then would not a large majority of them spend the greater portion of their lives in laziness and squalid abodes; indecently clothed in filthy rags and loathsome apparel; then would they not be destitute of the comforts of civilized life, which many of them so eagerly covet, and which, with a little industry, they could honestly possess; then would they not lack the blessing of dairy produce, which indolence alone now prevents their obtaining to a large extent from their various droves; then would the two million one hundred and twenty six thousand acres now left in their hands, in this Province, not make so lamentable and contemptible a return, for I learn from different surveyors, persons who know the country, and are most competent to give an approximate estimate of the quantity of land the natives have in cultivation in the whole of this Province, that it is about eighteen hundred acres! To illustrate: the Counties of Kent, Surrey, Middlesex, and Hertford embrace an area

of 2,065,920 acres, which is less in extent than the land in the hands of the natives of this Province by 60,663 acres. Notwithstanding this Province is so much larger than the four English Counties named, yet the 1782⁵ natives, who are called the owners of this immense tract, have not under cultivation more land than is contained in one of our medium parishes in England.

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If to behold a beautiful and fertile tract of country lying waste, without population, tillage, or any earthly use to man, and to lament that the withholding of it from the industrious settler is the cause of contention, treachery, and murder, and to grieve that it must not be used for the bountiful and merciful increase of flocks and herds, which for the want of pasture are sacrificed, to the cruel injury of the husbandman, is "to look with an evil eye upon the places which remain waste," then are the settlers of New Plymouth, in the eyes of all who uphold such doctrine, chargeable of this questionable sin.

Page 5, line 20. – "I have no fellowship with covetousness, because Ahab found it to be but the first step to blood-guiltiness."

To bring into comparison the distressed people of the restricted and circumscribed settlement of New Plymouth with the wicked Ahab, who had immense and superfluous possessions, and who, by the most awful sin and murder, robbed a humble owner of the small inheritance of his fathers, is, in my opinion, not a generous comparison, nor, indeed, is it a just analogy. Covetousness on the part of the natives, in claiming the same tracts of land, has led to the deplorable results which now oppress this settlement, degrade and embitter their lives.

Page 7, line 5. – "I find, therefore, upon the testimony of your most constant and zealous advocate, that land, equal in quantity to one-half of the 60,000 acres originally contemplated by the plan of the settlement, has already been acquired; and that there is reason to hope that the whole of the Company's block will eventually be acquired."

The inference that any one would draw from this statement is, that the New Plymouth settlers are now in actual possession of thirty thousand acres of available land. Bishop Selwyn should have known that the greater portion of the very land of which he speaks is broken, contorted ground, covered with dense forest; that it has injured the health and emptied the pocket of all who have persevered in endeavouring to bring it into cultivation. My profession and knowledge of country warrant me in saying that more than one-half of the land which has been purchased from the natives in the settlement of New Plymouth is unavailable land. I have made inquiry, but failed in obtaining a satis-

factory answer, why so much money has been spent, in fact wasted, in purchasing and surveying useless land, in a stipendiary province, which land, under any circumstances, must remain for ages as a drug in the hands of the Government.⁶

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When I originally selected this settlement as a promising field for colonists, I rejected the unavailable forest land, and chose a piece of country which, if it had remained in the hands of the settlers as sanctioned by the first Governor of the colony, with the reserves for the natives as I marked them on the map, I have no doubt but that this place would have advanced with a rapidity which none but those who have examined and know its capabilities would believe. The reserves, in the now wilderness district, would have been making returns sufficient to endow schools and render comfortable and happy homes to the natives, who, after eighteen years' intercourse with the settlers, are now doling out a contentious and unprofitable existence.

Mr. Hursthouse, the author to whom Bishop Selwyn alludes, has no personal knowledge of the primary stages of this settlement – he did not arrive here until a month or two before I departed for England, in August, 1843, neither did Bishop Selwyn ever visit Taranaki until October, 1842: and as I never made known to Mr. Hursthouse or Bishop Selwyn the ardour of the natives, when importuning me to bring white people and occupy the land, so that they might be protected from their enemies, the Waikatos, it cannot be expected that they could know the obligations of the natives to the Europeans. Different, indeed, would have been the representations made by Bishop Selwyn had he, like myself, known the whole truth and merits of the case at-

tending the colonising of New Plymouth. There are natives still living here who were present when their Chief and other speakers solicited me to take the land for this settlement, on the conditions I have stated, and I feel confident that they will bear testimony to the fact, if inquiry be made.

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Not only the natives who were existing on the coast, at the Sugar Loaf Islands, but the whole of the Ngatiawa tribe must in truth admit that they could not have returned here had not the enterprising colonist settled in this district, and served their purpose, as stipulated with me, of protecting them from the Waikatos. How dishonourable and unjust a part are they now acting, in withholding the land in the way they are! I learn from good authority, and one who thoroughly understands the language of the natives, that they often chuckle at our supineness respecting the circumstances, and payments made to them and the Waikatos for the land they still retain.

Page 9, line 24. – "When I first visited New Plymouth in October, 1842, I was accompanied by nearly forty men of the tribe, who came avowedly to ascertain whether the state of the country would allow of their return."

These forty men arrived at New Plymouth just eighteen months after the first body of colonists, and after several hundred white people had settled on the land, and after the demonstration and consummation of the Waikato claim to the land. The natives of New Plymouth owe everything to the settlers; the part they have been and now are acting towards the colonists is ungracious in the extreme, and cannot prosper them.

Page 10, line 33. – "No menaces of military interference are likely to have any effect upon men who, from their childhood, have been accustomed to regard it as a point of honour to shed their last drop of blood for the inheritance of their tribe."

Although this may be the opinion of Bishop Selwyn in regard to the New Zealanders generally, and although such may have been their character in early days, the penetrative observer cannot but admit that they are an enervated people; their mode of life, habits, and intercourse with civilized man have wrought such change in their character and bearing that they cannot now be looked upon as the once bold and daring New Zealander. It is wisely ordained that it should be so; otherwise their avarice might prompt them to attempt deeds which would lead to their destruction. They have all to lose and nothing to gain by collision. I look upon the government and management of these people

as a thing definite and clear – firmness and kindness, with judicious example, will accomplish much.

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I cannot see how Bishop Selwyn can conscientiously make the statement he has in reference to the natives of New Plymouth; his knowledge of their character and their abandoning this district, and the circumstances attending the purchase of this place from the resident aboriginal inhabitants and the Waikatos, must tell him that the waste land question here is totally different from that of any other part of New Zealand. What say the Waikatos when reproached for receiving payment for the New Plymouth land? Do they not say, We were the conquerors of the country and the true and rightful owners of the soil; if you have been foolish enough to allow those we conquered, and our slaves, to occupy the country which we sold to you, you have no one to blame but yourselves. I would ask, What says Christian philanthropy and true policy? Does it not say, Suffer not these people to destroy one another, nor allow them to live in anarchy without God or Christ in their world. So far from these people shedding their last drop of blood for the inheritance of their tribe, they have, by their treachery, murders, and dastardly behaviour in their recent wars, shown themselves to be but bombastic savages, whose wicked conduct no Christian Government should tolerate. O that I could so convince the power which ought to govern these people! then would the waste land become a fruitful field, and the portion of the native would be greatly enhanced.

Bishop Selwyn has more than once made allusion to the warlike character of the New Zealanders, and reminded the inhabitants of towns that the lives and property of the settlers "can only be preserved by the greatest forbearance and the strictest justice in our dealings with the native people."

People are sometimes more or less swayed from the paths of better judgment by the vauntings of avaricious and ungracious barbarians, but, as the justice of the land purchase in the New Plymouth settlement from the Waikatos and the resident aboriginal inhabitants, and the advantages the latter have received through colonisation, is admitted by an overwhelming majority of the natives, there is not anything to fear in the way of collision with these parties. If the matter be properly managed, the admissions of the natives would, in all probability, be a means of effectually and amicably settling this long-vexed and deplorable catastrophe. It should be remembered that it is but a small body of the natives who are acting so unjustly by withhold-

ing from the settlers more than two millions of acres which they never did, and never can, by any means occupy or require.

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Bishop Selwyn, in summing up his letter, page 15, paragraphs 2 and 3, says: "I desire to see each native land owner secured by a Crown Grant for his own individual property, and registered as a voter, on the same qualification as an Englishman."

"When the native landowners are thus registered and represented, with full recognition of equal rights and privileges, I will not be backward in explaining to them that they are liable to all taxes, penalties, and other public burthens, in common with all other classes of her Majesty's subjects."

It appears to me that the above assertions were recorded by Bishop Selwyn with desire of justice to the native, but without the knowledge of facts or due reflection, for I can affirm, if Bishop Selwyn's desire in this matter were carried out in the New Plymouth settlement, the place to which the sentiment is addressed, it would be the most effectual means of ridding the natives of the land of any that could be devised with a semblance of justice.

The average tax upon the settlers' country land in this settlement is eight-pence per acre. If, therefore, the natives were obliged to pay after the same ratio as the settlers, the sum total of the tax for their land, 2,126,588 acres, in this province, would be £70,886 per annum, and as they are, with very few exceptions, improvident and indolent, and are in extreme indigence, it would be entirely out of their power to meet the obligation, consequently, they would be obliged to bring to market the taxed land; the result would be forced sales and low prices, and in a very few years, with their indolence, improvidence, and intemperance, we should see them as beggarly in land as they now are arrogant in bearing.

Page 15, line 38. – "I shall resist, by all lawful means, every attempt to carry out any other interpretation of the Treaty of Waitangi than that in which it was explained to the natives by Governor Hobson, and understood and accepted by them."

Up to the time of my leaving New Zealand for England in August, 1843, I never heard allusion made to the Treaty of Waitangi, either by native or European. I truly and conscientiously believe the said treaty was not known to the natives here when I left the colony in 1843. How Governor Hobson explained this treaty to the dissociated tribes of a new and unexplored country, nine hundred miles in length, and equal in extent to Great Britain, will ever remain unknown. At all events, whether baneful or beneficial to the natives and colonists, it

appears to be the intention of Government to carry out this treaty. Therefore, in mercy to these natives and justice to the settlers of New Plymouth, it should be borne in mind –

1st. That a treaty was made with the resident aboriginal inhabitants of this place and the agents of the New Zealand Company, by treaty they ceded the land of this district to the said Company, on condition of their receiving certain payments, and, although the final payment was not made at the time as stipulated, subsequent payments made to them by Government for this same land, and the protection they received by the settlers enabling them to return to this locality, are considerably more than equivalent to the non-fulfilment of the promised final payment.

2nd. The Waikatos claimed the land by conquest, and avouched their right to the district by a descent on the settlement. These rights and claims were purchased from them by Governor Hobson.

3rd. I was specially solicited by the resident natives of this place to bring white people to occupy and settle this part of the country, which, at that time, was without an inhabitant, except the fifty or sixty aborigines who urged the request.

4th. The seventeen hundred and eighty two natives, who are now called the owners of the two million one hundred and twenty six thousand unoccupied acres in the New Plymouth Province, could not have returned here if this district had not been settled upon by the enterprising colonist.

Page 16. – "I hold it to be an act unworthy of Englishmen to avail ourselves of any native custom, either of conquest or slavery, to disfranchise any class of native proprietors; especially when experience has proved that, where no party questions are raised, the native title can be extinguished, and all classes of claimants satisfied, for a few halfpence per acre."⁷

To disfranchise, or, rather, to dispossess any class of native proprietors without a legal or equitable right would certainly be unworthy of Englishmen, but I hold that the Government are both legally and equitably entitled to the land at New Plymouth, from the facts I have adduced.

I hold it to be an act unworthy of Englishmen to induce people to leave their occupation and the land of their birth to come to the most distant British Colony under the representation that they might, with industry and integrity, create for themselves and families increased and happy homes, for though, on arrival, they behold the elements of realization in a lovely and fertile country, waste and unoccupied, they find that, instead of the lovely and fertile country, they may seek their anticipated happy home in the rough and broken ground of the primeval forest, where, with indefatigable zeal and perseverance, they may struggle, till unremunerated toil and injured health tell the sad tale that a careworn countenance and premature old age are the only rewards of their enterprise.

Upon those who have persuaded the Government to pursue its present lamentable policy towards the natives of this settlement, and the unjust and unfeeling act of withholding from the settler the immense tract of fertile, waste, and unoccupied land of this Province, given by the Giver of all Good for the express use of man, must devolve a responsibility which generations will not efface, and good men can-not but deplore.

My Lord, I cannot persuade myself that it was ever ordained by the All Wise and All Provident Creator that hundreds of thousands of acres of fertile land should lie waste and unoccupied, in a salubrious country, nominally in the hands of a few rude natives, who use it as a bone of contention, and frustrate the invitations and blessings of the Gospel, by forcing the civilized settler into secluded spots of the rough and broken forest ground, where, veritably without roads, or means of taking his family to the House of God, Sabbath after Sabbath is lamentably passed away with increased evil consequences to the husbandman, and bad example to the native, from not "assembling ourselves together."

Many of us, by strange misapprehension, fancy that we have done and are doing our duty to these natives, who, now, after eighteen years intercourse with civilised man, are in many respects more fallen than they were. But, my Lord, does it not behove us as a Christian people to consider whether we are not incurring a heavy responsibility for continuing a course which, after many years of trial and experience, is unprofitable and ungodly in result? Are we doing our duty to our fellow-creatures, the New Zealanders, our own countrymen, or the State, in allowing this immense tract of fertile land to lie waste, when at the same time we have a body of hardworking and deserving settlers who in truth are grievously distressed for the want of fertile land; and

while we have an immense number of poor in the mother country who, from the want of employment, are a constant burthen to numerous parishes throughout the kingdom, who, if they were (as they might be, through the funds which would be derived from the sale of this immense tract of now useless land) assisted by passage here, would be a certain means of opening out and developing the hidden resources of this country?⁸

If some such humane and considerate course were adopted, it would be a peaceful and conclusive way of harmonizing and civilizing the natives, assisting the deserving depressed colonist, relieving the home parishes of an irksome burthen, augmenting the employment of labourer and artisan, increasing manufactures and commerce, and adding to the revenue. "The voice of joy and gladness" would then resound in the dwellings of the now dejected poor, and "the wilderness and solitary place shall then be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and, blossom as the rose."

Perhaps I should here remark to your lordship that, on the 18th of May last, one of the Responsible Advisers of the Government moved for leave "to bring in Bills to make better provision for the administration of justice in native districts," and, after reciting to the members of the House certain passages contained in the despatches of some of our most eminent statesmen – Lord Stanley, the now Earl Derby, Earl Grey, &c., – in reference to the administration of laws among the natives and commenting thereon, he called the attention of the House to the following passage contained in Sir George Grey's despatch of the 15th December, 1847. "I therefore have hitherto in as little as possible noticed or interfered with the native laws or customs, as exercised among themselves, and the result is that they are rapidly becoming obsolete and forgotten." The honorable member then observed – "Really, sir, I must ask the House to mark the last sentence – native customs in 1847 were rapidly becoming obsolete and forgotten!! There

is a good deal of strong assertion scattered up and down these despatches; but I declare I think amongst many daring statements this is the most audacious. I confess I feel something of indignation in reading statements of this kind, so magnifying of self, so far passing all bounds of sobriety and truth, and so thoroughly unjust to those who come after, and upon whom really devolves the labour which is represented as all but complete." Again – "Sir George Grey did very little of a permanent character. His policy was a temporizing policy; he played for a time. He was quite right, and we to a certain extent must do the same. It is now

fit, however, to lay the foundations of somewhat more enduring." These remarks of the honorable member show at a glance the present Government opinion of native advancement, and the spirit of the policy about to be pursued by the Colonial Government.

It should be borne in mind that a large amount of the native population around Auckland, where I presume Sir George Grey wrote the despatch in question, had made considerable advancement in civilization, and there can be no doubt but that Sir George Grey was more forcibly impressed with that which he almost daily witnessed among a numerous body of the aborigines, than the scenes of contention, anarchy, and blood, enacted by the remnant of a tribe and comparatively few, in the isolated settlement of New Plymouth, and other less important parts of this colony.

By the "Bill to make better provision for the administration of Justice in Native Districts," it is proposed "to give independent jurisdiction to a small amount, and over natives only, to the Native Assessor sitting alone."

If this law, which is experimental, is attempted to be carried and enforced in this place, I fear it will lead to sad disappointment.

To elucidate more clearly the working of the Bill, I will suppose a very probable case: – A native has a difference with a Chief, and, considering himself wronged, he applies for a summons; the case is tried before the Assessor – he proves his complaint – the Assessor inflicts a fine upon the Chief – he refuses to pay the fine; if the majesty of the law is attempted to be enforced he will most certainly resist, and, possessing a certain amount of influence, the law must either be a dead letter or lead to strife, perhaps murder.

My Lord, is it not delusive policy to think of making men either moral or religious by legislation, or to attempt to civilize the barbarian, by precept or law, without action? Civilization, in my opinion, can only be effected by example and action. In all parts of the world

where I have been, I have invariably found that, as are the roads and internal communication of a country, so are the people. Leading roads would be the means of developing this country, and bringing to light much of the hidden and mineral wealth of New Zealand, and would prove a more sure and advantageous way of civilizing and governing the native population than any temporizing or experimental policy, which policy, it appears to me, at best, can only be introduced in certain districts, where considerable advancement has taken place among the aborigines.

Now that I have mentioned the bringing to light the hidden resources of New Zealand, I would call the attention of the humane and patriotic to the fact of there not being any harbour on the West coast of New Zealand, safe and accessible at all times and seasons, from Cook's Strait to the North Cape, a distance of more than 400 miles.

In looking at the map of New Zealand, and viewing it independently or in relation to the adjoining Colonies, the Mother Country, or in a political and patriotic point of view, it cannot be otherwise than admitted that a harbour at the Sugar Loaf Islands would be one of the most important, advantageous, and humane public works which could be effected in the Colony. Its geographical position would make it the key to the Strait, and a harbour of refuge when the vicissitudes of States and elements call for its aid. In a commercial and local point of view the benefit would be alike simultaneous with merchant and native; secular and Christian feeling also dictates that it is our duty to carry out a work so important to the well-being, not only of our own nation, but all whom enterprise and commerce cause to visit this part of the world.

The question naturally arises, – Is it practicable to effect so desirable a good without incurring an expense beyond the limited means at the disposal of the Government of the Colony? In my opinion it is practicable, even on this head; the work is by nature half-done, and abundance of material ready at hand for completion.

It might be made a work of Christian charity, assuming that which I trust will not be the case, that we shall not have the waste land of this Province at the disposal of Government for some years to come, and, consequently, shall not have a land and emigration fund. If such be the case, does not Christian philanthropy remind us of the noble works which have been executed at Portland, Holyhead, and other parts of the Kingdom, chiefly by means of convict labour; and does not charity tell us that these works were performed by men who toiled against hope, who, when they had made expiation for their offences,

went forth from their prisons with a heavy heart, knowing that they were the marked men of a superabundant population, with little chance of future employment, who, though they had resolved to lead a new life, found themselves foiled in every effort by the stigma they bore? These are the men to whom I would call the special consideration of all good men, and all who are in heart the humble followers of Him who was the friend of sinners. Instead of the indiscriminate convict system which was pursued in Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales, I would suggest the employment of those who, by their probationary conduct at home, have shown themselves deserving, and are desirous of amending their lives.

In no part of the world that I have seen could this kind of labour be more judiciously and humanely employed than in this colony. The difficulties and expense attending the making of leading roads and bridges through this country are greater than I have met with in other parts of the world where I have been. It is fallacious to think that any ordinary taxes levied upon the settlers will be sufficient to lay out and construct the requisite roads and bridges to civilize, commerce, and govern this country; and, unless something such as I have suggested be devised and carried out, generations will pass away before New Zealand becomes a civilized country,⁹ or we become acquainted with the vast mines of wealth which now lie hidden within our reach.

I trust I have faithfully recorded the various and important statements bearing upon the conflicting circumstances now oppressing the people of this settlement. My early and intimate acquaintance with these natives, and my personal knowledge of momentous facts relating to the first colonising of this part of New Zealand, should be taken advantage of while I am here and in health, and as I am, and ever have been, on the best of terms with these people, much good might be effected towards the settlement of the "Land Question." If this suggestion be attended to, it may have more effect in bringing to a

close this deplorable catastrophe than any one at present, but myself can imagine.

In concluding a letter commenting on matters of policy and vital responsibility, in which the past, the present, and the future, are gravely involved, it is incumbent on the writer to show that he is of unexceptionable character.

I therefore beg leave to submit for your Lordship's perusal copies of a few of my testimonials, and to refer your Lordship to Sir Roderick Murchison, who has known me for 25 years, and to Colonel Dawson, who has known me for 33 years.

I have received personal approbation from his Royal Highness the Prince Consort for my topographical works, and have been honored in my studio in London by the then Premier, the late Sir Robert Peel; the Viscount Hardinge, the late Commander-in-Chief; and many other noblemen, Members of Parliament,

distinguished and scientific men, who have expressed themselves in a most gratifying manner to me,

Your Lordship may probably remember doing me the honor of a visit in Henrietta-street, and inspecting my models of country.

The "Times," and many other leading journals, have noticed my works in a complimentary way. At the Great Exhibition a prize medal was awarded me.

Confiding in your Lordship, I leave the question of this letter in your Lordship's hands, and trusting that it may receive the consideration the matter deserves, and be a means, through the Colonial Minister, of aiding and furthering the wishes of his Excellency the Governor of this Colony, in all that appertains to the well-being and prosperity of this place and people, the colonisation and development of New Zealand generally, the honor and dignity of her Majesty's Government.

I have the honor to remain,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient,
Humble servant,
FRED. A. CARRINGTON.
The Right Honorable
The Earl Shaftesbury, &c., &c., &c.

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New Plymouth,
21st March, 1859.

SIR, –

In my letter of the 12th July last, addressed to the Earl Shaftesbury and forwarded to your Excellency on the 29th October for consideration or transmission, the following passage occurs: – "The Chiefs, with few exceptions degraded savages, are jealous of each other in every transaction regarding the payment made by Government for the land, and, in many instances, there are contending parties for the same piece of ground; hence it follows that these poor ignorant beings become exasperated with each other, and deeds of blood and murder, and the most revolting acts, have ensued from this, the present mode of acquiring land in this settlement," &c. It is, therefore, with deep concern I learn "That special instructions from her Majesty preclude his Excellency from coercing a minority of the natives into selling their lands," without a discretionary alternative; "that he felt that such a proceeding would be impolitic and unjust, and that, therefore, he never would sanction it," &c.

The coercing of a minority of the natives into selling their lands is a course which Her Most Gracious Majesty, your Excellency, and all right-minded men, would never sanction; but, inasmuch as the peace of this settlement and the well-being of this community, both native and European, hinges on this very point, I respectfully and earnestly submit for consideration the following remark and suggestion: –

When a majority of the natives have determined on offering a tract of waste land for sale, the resolve is made after much speechifying, consultation, and reflection, with the view of obtaining money for the purpose of procuring such commodities as are genial to their feelings and conducive to their advancement and civilisation; but if, through a minority of the natives, the majority are thwarted in their wishes and prevented from selling their equitable portion of this said waste land, feelings of the worst character are generated between the parties, and experience in this place tells us "that deeds of blood and murder, and the most revolting acts, have ensued from this, the present mode of acquiring land in this settlement." I therefore beg leave to suggest, for your Excellency's consideration, that when a majority of the natives are desirous of selling a tract of waste land, subject to the approval of the Chief Land Purchase Commissioner, that Native Assessors be authorised to inquire into the claims of the opposing party, and that they be empowered to determine a boundary and to apportion to them

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such quantity of the said tract as in their opinion shall be just and equitable in every point of view.

If some such course be adopted, I truly believe it will be a means of conciliating much angry feeling, and prevent further dissension and effusion of blood.

I have the honor to be,
Your Excellency's most obedient,
Humble servant,
FRED. A. CARRINGTON,
His Excellency
Colonel Thomas Gore Browne,
Governor of New Zealand, &c., &c., &c.,
New Plymouth.

New Plymouth,
March 22nd, 1859.

SIR, -

I am directed by the Governor to acknowledge his Excellency's receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, and I have the honor to inform you that there is an inaccuracy in the report of what the Governor said on the occasion you allude to.

The Governor informed the deputation that he had reported at great length to her Majesty's Government on native affairs in connection with the Province of Taranaki, and particularly in reference to a proposal to coerce a minority of native proprietors who might be disinclined to sell land.

He expressed his opinion that such a course would be (considering our engagements with the natives) both unjust and impolitic, and her Majesty's Government had conveyed to him in a despatch, received by the last mail, their unqualified approval of his views.

His Excellency is obliged to you for your suggestions, but, differing in opinion with you as he does, he is unable to adopt them.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
F. G. STEWARD,
Private Secretary.
Frederic A. Carrington, Esq.,
&c., &c., &c.

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Let me here direct your particular attention to the above letter, and see the uncompromising and irritating policy pursued towards these unfortunate aborigines.

A body of natives, who are called the owners of a certain tract of land, wish to dispose of it to the Government; a few of the party, however, refuse to sell their share. The Government then say we will not let you, the majority, force the minority to retain their portion of the said tract, and allow you to sell your portion; and, unless you all agree to part with it, we will not purchase.

It appears to me, from the words of the above letter, that Her Majesty's Government direct that a minority of the natives are not to be coerced if disinclined to sell land; but, I do not see that any objection is offered to the suggestion I submitted to his Excellency in reference to this particular point, viz., "that Native Assessors be authorised to inquire into the claims of the opposing party, and that they be empowered to determine a boundary, and to apportion to them such quantity of the said tract as in their opinion shall be just and equitable in every point of view."

In my opinion, the alternative persisted in by the Government is unjust towards the aborigines and unfeeling towards the Colonists, – either be unanimous in the sale of your useless land, or hold it in its worthless state. Avarice and unrelenting obstinacy being the predominant character of the natives, it is hopeless to look for unison while treating with them for tracts of land. In this place the darkest deeds of blood and murder have ensued from jealousies evoked in our negotiations for the soil.

Little did the framers of "the Treaty of Waitangi" ever contemplate the distraction and deeds of horror, that would arise from the course adopted by them to secure the pre-emption of the soil of New Zealand to the Crown of England. Better, infinitely better, that we had never professed to have entered into any treaty, BEYOND THOSE ACTUALLY TREATED WITH.

I learn from indubitable authority, and from one of the most enlightened and intelligent chiefs of the Taranaki tribe, that his people repudiate the idea of their being bound by the Treaty of Waitangi. He has repeatedly named to me that neither himself, the present leading chiefs, nor their fathers, ever signed, admitted, or avowed adherence to its precepts!¹⁰ He admits that the Waikatos assented, signed, and

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are bound by it. That the assertion here made bears truth is evident from this fact, – the natives who are called the owners of the soil in this province were in bondage at Waikato and Kawhia, and otherwise dispersed at the time the said treaty was executed. That there may be found an individual or two in this province who have signed this treaty I am not prepared to deny, but I much doubt it.

If the above statement made by the Taranaki chief be correct, and we disavow our right to the land which we acquired from the Waikatos, it is clear that the pre-emption of the soil of this district is not secured to the Crown of England; – consequently, any person or persons, of any nation or nations, may legally buy up the whole of this waste land, and possibly raise a diplomatic question!

If Government are really anxious to settle this long-vexed question, in a part of New Zealand where now lies hidden the germ of the most deadly feud, and if they would avoid expense and save the lives of contending parties, it is in their power to do so; not "by subsidizing the Waikatos," but by going into the matter in a business and statesman-like manner. The case is clear. –

Private Secretary's Office,
Auckland, 20th August, 1859.

SIR, –

I have the honor, by direction of the Governor, to forward for your information the accompanying copy of a Despatch from the Secretary of State, received by his Excellency by the May mail.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
F. G. STEWARD,
Private Secretary.
F. A. Carrington, Esq.,
Taranaki.

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[COPY.]
Downing-street,
24th April, 1859.

SIR, –

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch No. 109, of the 25th November last, enclosing a copy of a letter addressed by Mr. F. A. Carrington to the Earl of Shaftesbury, on the policy which he recommends to be pursued by the New Zealand Government towards the Aboriginal Inhabitants with reference to the acquisition of land.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) CARNARVON.
(In the absence of Sir E. B. Lytton.)

New Plymouth,
29th August, 1859.

SIR, –

Though eighteen years have now rolled by since this part of New Zealand was first colonised, I lament that it is my painful duty to reiterate to your Excellency the distressing scenes which I daily witness among the Natives and Colonists, from the cruel policy under which this Province is still doomed to struggle.

It is manifest to all who are interested in the preservation and civilization of the now remnant native race, and who are not devoid of fellow-feeling for a people wronged and grievously circumstanced, that a course different to that which has hitherto been pursued, should be adopted in regard to the aborigines and colonists of this settlement.

The degraded, nay indecent and loathsome condition in which the majority of the natives congregate and huddle in their whares and pahs, alike pernicious to morality and health, the idle and useless manner in which many of them waste their lives, devising to their own detriment and fomenting discord, – the secluded, isolated, and doleful way that many families of the settlers are forced to live in their forest farms, with scanty means and constant toil, prohibited the use of the fertile waste unoccupied land, debarred society and the House of God, – the inhuman treatment and angry language which I have witnessed

towards poor dumb brutes, consequent from the aggravation caused by the almost impassable broken steepes of the forest roads, – and the fearful consequences arising from these things, is the immediate cause of my submitting for your Excellency's consideration the remarks contained in this letter.

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Presuming that no one will be more ready than your Excellency to admit that this state of society ought not to be in a salubrious and fertile district, proverbially "The Garden of New Zealand," I will at once observe, that our knowledge of the history and commerce of the most enlightened and progressive nations on earth warrant the assertion that great leading thoroughfares throughout these islands would be the most ready and effectual way of ameliorating the condition of both races – developing, commercing, and bringing to light much of the hidden and mineral wealth of this country.

Without referring to the power ceded to the Crown by the Treaty of Waitangi, or looking to the Sovereign's right to make a highway throughout this country, I beg leave to suggest –

1. That the country be examined, and the very best lines for roads, from Province to Province, be ascertained.
2. Let these lines be properly surveyed, and a report made upon them, accompanied with a map, detailing the particulars of each district, nature of soil, &c., &c. This being done, it can then be determined what width of land will be required in different localities for the purpose of furnishing funds to make the roads.
3. Let Native Reserves be made along these lines.
4. Let the land on either side of the proposed roads be laid out in blocks, sections, and townships, according to the nature, character, and locality of the country.
5. Let plans of the proposed lines of road be made, showing the native, the Government, and other reserves; the sections and other divisions of land.
6. Let public notice be given, in the Australian as well as the local papers, when the land along any line or portion of a line will be open for sale.
7. Let the land be sold, and the money received from the sale appropriate to making the roads.
8. Let the natives be employed in constructing the roads, and let them understand that they are getting back the money for which the land was sold, giving greater value to that which they retain, and doing that whereby they can bring to market the returns of the soil and the increase of their stock.
9. Regarding the reserves made for the natives, I will briefly remark that, the tribes being subdivided into small communities or hapus, would it not be judicious to make an apportionment for each hapu? and, with a view to discourage the erection of frail squalid habitations within pahs, would it not be advisable to mark out sites for villages and townships, to aid in the erection of suitable buildings, urge the use of agricultural implements, &c., and have Government Agents to superintend and instruct the tribes generally?

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The most zealous, advocates for the observance of the Treaty of Waitangi must admit that the suggestions I have offered, if acted upon, would be carrying out the spirit of the Treaty, and inasmuch as the territorial rights of the natives will in no way be affected, other than by, giving immense increased value to the waste lands, I trust that objections on this head will not be raised.

I will not trouble your Excellency by entering into details on the remarks I have offered. I have well considered the whole matter:

I do not see a difficulty which, with proper tact and management, may not be overcome, and why, in the course of a very few years, we should not be able to effect a vast improvement among the Aborigines, and to have continuous blocks of land in occupation or cultivation, and good macadamized roads from north to south, in these islands.

Then may we hope to ameliorate the "debased social habits which usually attend a low condition of civilisation," and arrest the decay of the Native race portrayed by Fenton, and realize the impression of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies in having "crowned with a very remarkable success, and in paving the way towards that complete civilisation and consolidation of the Native race with the English colonists which Her Majesty's Government, not less than the local Government, desire to see effected."

I have the honor to be,
Your Excellency's most obedient,
Humble servant,
FRED. A. CARRINGTON.
His Excellency
Colonel Thomas Gore Browne, C. B.,
Governor of New Zealand,
&c., &c., &c.

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Private Secretary's Office,
Auckland, 10th September, 1859.

SIR, –

I am directed by the Governor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th August, 1859, for which his Excellency desires me to express to you his best thanks.

I have the honor to be,
Your obedient servant,
F. G. STEWARD,
Private Secretary.
F. A. Carrington, Esq.,
&c., &c., &c.

Before closing my observations on the distracting and destructive New Zealand Land Question, let me claim your attention to some further remarks.

I have already noted the pathetic articles so graphically portrayed in the "Times" of December, 1858, and January, '59, in reference to the homeless poor of the Mother Country, and now again, in few words, let me crave your calm reflection on the amazing increase of population in the United Kingdom.

It appears from the last report of the Registrar-General that the average excess of births over deaths in the United Kingdom is 1042 daily.

Notwithstanding the demand which may be made for serviceable men for the augmentation of our Army and Navy, Volunteer Corps and Defences, &c., &c., it is evident that the astounding increase of population in the United Kingdom would soon be something most alarming had not Providence ordained the waste lands of the earth for the use, the occupation, and sustenance of the superabundant inhabitants of the nations He is pleased to multiply.

It should also be borne in mind that, before the systematic colonisation of this country took place, the land was comparatively of little value; in fact, the mass of the country was valueless, the natives having neither the means nor the inclination to bring it into use; it produced them nothing beyond their immediate wants; and, if colo-

nisation had not taken place in these islands, the waste land would have remained in a state of nature, and uncared for.

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It is labour, industry, the toil and sweat of the brow, combined with knowledge, experience, and population, aided by capital, that gives value to land; this it is that the Natives have seen, and their blind avarice prompts them to view the waste land in the light of a tilled and fructified soil.

Perhaps I cannot more clearly elucidate this assertion (which I have from the avowal of the natives) than by giving, as an illustration, the facts relating to the land on each side of the river Waitara, in this Province.

Many, very many thousands of acres of land, on each side of the river Waitara, are held by some six hundred¹¹ Natives, who, though they reside only ten or twelve miles from the town of New Plymouth, and have had the advantage of intercourse with a civilized community for nineteen years, yet are living in a debased social condition; their habitations are squalid and miserable, their clothing loathsome and frequently indecent, their food often disgusting, their cultivations limited and insignificant; the immense tract of land they hold, though "the Garden of the Country," and possessing an admirable site for a town, is rapidly becoming a prey to noxious weeds. They are jealous of selling land to the Government, notwithstanding ample reserves would be made, and a just and liberal price would be paid them: – the "Treaty of Waitangi" prohibits their otherwise selling, and the Acts of the Government restrain them from leasing to private individuals; and now that the country has become peopled with a diversity of characters, perhaps it would not be wise to relax these stringent laws,¹² further than

desirable Public Auction Sales, as it would indirectly legalize controversy, trickery, and worse evils. The fix in which this, and all the other waste land is placed by the Treaty of Waitangi is the constant theme of conversation, and the unjust and unrighteous act of keeping the country locked up has induced jobbery, evasion, chicanery, and truckling to the natives; thereby setting at defiance the Acts, and bringing into contempt the power of Government.

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I will now briefly remark on the capabilities of this said Waitara district, which, as well as other New Zealand waste land, I think I have shown to be, while in the hands of the Natives, a land of sin and sorrow, anxiety and waste, subverting Government, and inviting opposition.

In relation to the adjoining colonies – an important point, – the locality of the Waitara is second to no other part of New Zealand; – the ground on each side of the river, near its embouchure, if in the hands of civilized men, would quickly become very valuable; it has the advantage of a small craft tidal harbour, with a sufficient depth of water for coasters and traders from the adjoining colonies; the climate is salubrious, and the soil on each side of the river, for many miles along the coast and inland, is very fertile; and, as it presents an admirable site for building, there cannot be any reasonable doubt but that, in a very short time, a town would spring up of considerable importance in commerce and revenue.

It requires but little energy and firmness to carry out this great good. I believe myself that the natives, in heart and thought, would bless the day that Government took into their hands the management and disposal of this land, as it would release them from their present estranged and embarrassed mode of life.

Would it not be wise, just, and humane, for Government to take the control of this land; to reserve all that is requisite for the use of the natives, and, with the proceeds derived from the sale of the remainder, construct roads, without which we cannot civilize these people, erect suitable buildings, and aid them in all that is desirable in husbandry and other matters.

In conclusion, let me draw your particular notice to the following paragraphs, coinciding with my own observations, taken from Fenton's work, published by the Government in 1859, for the purpose of drawing "attention to the state of the Native population, – especially to its decrease in numbers, – with a view to invite inquiry as to the cause, and suggestions of a remedy."

Mr. H. Halse, late Assistant Native Secretary at Taranaki,

writes: "I am unable to report in any way favourably of the general condition of the Natives of the New Plymouth district."

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The Rev. C. H. Schnackenburg states: "The greatest cause of decrease, I believe, is uncleanness, inwardly and outwardly, in diet, dress, and habitation, in body and mind, in all their thoughts, words, and actions."

Mr. Fenton says: "In my opinion the social condition of the Maories is inferior to what it was five years ago. Their houses are worse, their cultivations more neglected, and their mode of living not improved. The mills in many places have not run for some time, and the poverty of the people generally is extreme."

It also appears "that, with the exception of the debased social habits which usually attend a low condition of civilization," inquiry has hitherto failed (conclusively) to account for the causes of decrease in numbers.

Rapidly and ignobly are the Maories passing away: uncleanness and lethargic habits no doubt are the cause. It is mournful to think that an Aboriginal population must perish, and a civilized community be made to suffer needless privations, through the avarice, obstinacy, and ingratitude of these unrelenting, indolent, decaying Natives, when it is in the power of Government, with little effort, to rescue the one and to redress the other.

p> At the very time that the Colonial Government are publishing authenticated facts, showing the deplorable social condition of the Aborigines, and while they are inviting suggestions to remedy these evils, is it not surprising that her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies should be so little informed on these important matters as to pen, on the 18th of May last, to the Governor of this Colony, the following words: "Native affairs, the administration of which has been, up to the present time, considering the difficulties and intricacies of the subject, crowned with a very remarkable success, and is paving the way towards that complete civilization and consolidation of the Native race with the English colonists which her Majesty's Government, not less than the local Government, desire to see effected."

Alas! instead of paving the way towards complete civilization, have we not been pursuing a course which has evoked from the Maories the most strenuous and obstinate opposition to the furtherance of that desirable object? So far from the Native race consolidating with the English Colonists, I presume there cannot be a doubt on the mind of any unbiassed and observing person (if the present cramped, narrowminded land policy is persisted in), but that the seeds of enmity which are now sowing among the races will germinate and grow into disruption and strife.

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At the instance of the Government, and from my own experience in other parts of the world, and my observations in this Colony, I have ventured to suggest, in my letter of the 29th August last, addressed to his Excellency the Governor, and herewith published, a means whereby we may yet civilize and save a remnant of the native race; acquire territory in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty of Waitangi; throw open communication from Province to Province; develop and commerce the now wilderness parts of this Colony.

If, after the perusal of the facts I have stated and the suggestions I have offered in this pamphlet, you should hold to my views, I trust that you will not fail to urge the same before his Excellency and the General Assembly. By so doing we may yet move the heart of the Imperial Government to feel and redress the evils complained of; and I shall then realize all that I desire by this publication.

I am,

My Friends and Fellow-Colonists,

Yours faithfully,

FRED. A. CARRINGTON.

¹ *Note. – The Government Statistics of 1856 show the Aboriginal population of this Province to be 1782. Fenton's work, published by the Government in 1859, states the Aboriginal population at 3015. The discrepancy of 1233 is made by the Government omitting some of the pahs and Fenton giving the number from Cape Egmont to the Patea River at 1335, whereas I learn from different gentlemen who know the district well that the population in question between the places named "is certainly under 400." which number, for the sake of a nearer approximation I will assume; the Aboriginal population of this Province would then appear to be 2080. – F. A. C.

² Note. – Also 22, 300 acres on the South side of the river Waitara.

³ Vide Note page 2.

⁴ Vide Note page 4.

⁵ Vide Note page 4.

⁶ *Note. – The character of a large portion of the New Plymouth forest land is such that it can only be remunerative to those who give it value by their own labour. It is clear that, at the present rate of wages, it will not pay to spend the amount of money required to bring it into agricultural use. The parties who would be likely to purchase this forest land, from its low price of 10s. an acre, are those who have small, very small capitals, of which, in the Mother Country, there are a large class, hard-working men, who would make excellent colonists. Now, as small capitalists, such as I have named, would have the means of supporting themselves while they are bringing their land into use, would it not be advisable for the Government to give to these people a certain amount of forest land, under conditions? By so doing we should render a permanent good to the Province, and to many deserving and now struggling families at home. The sequel would be, that instead of having tens of thousands of acres of unremunerating forest land, we should possess a large number of thriving homesteads, with a happy people, who will not only have rendered an invaluable service in opening up good roads and given immense increased value to the now occupied portion of the forest land, but we shall have an extended commerce and greater revenue.

⁷ Note. – I have not the least doubt but that the whole of Taranaki could have been purchased, as Bishop Selwyn observes, at a few halfpence per acre, if the affair had been properly managed at first; but now, since we have imparted knowledge to the natives, and shown them, by our industry and commerce, the value we have given to their abandoned district, they are avaricious and exorbitant in their demands for land which never was of the smallest use to them.

8 Note. – Who, with a generous heart, can read the pathetic articles so graphically portrayed in the "Times" of December, 1858, and January, 1859, in reference to the homeless poor of the Mother Country, and yet withhold his pen, and not be moved to commiserate and urge upon Government the use of the means ordained by the All Provident Creator for the sustenance and renovation of a superabundant, dejected, and homeless population? When I think of the immense tracts of fertile land which lie waste and unoccupied in this salubrious country – a provident means to effect the civilization and the amelioration of the native race – the many struggling families that might be made happy, and the souls that might be saved, by a wise and just policy, I cannot but grieve to witness the cold and unfeeling indifference manifested by those who are in a position to bring to notice and carry out so benign a work.

9 Note. – It was said by Raynal, that if we "travel over all the countries of the earth, wherever we shall find no facility of passing from a city to a town, or from a village to a hamlet, there we may pronounce the people to be barbarians." The grazing tracts in New Zealand intercept a large portion of country in which we find "no facility of passing from a city to a town, or from a village to a hamlet," and, under existing regulations, I fear there is but little hope for intersecting thoroughfares; but, if the wild grazing lands of New Zealand were judiciously managed for the next twenty years, they should produce to the Government at least two millions sterling more than will be obtained under the present system. If this financial matter be attended to, and the money appropriated to the making of roads, it will greatly facilitate the civilizing of this country, and be a means of realizing a much larger sum whenever the land is sold.

10 Note. – When hearing this statement, I always told the Chief that I was not the person to whom he should make known such sentiments; that he should have addressed himself to the Governor when he was here. I requested him to refrain his feelings until he again saw his Excellency; he promised me he would do so, but was resolved to tell him at the next meeting.

11 Note. – This number I take from Fenton's work: it is evidently a mistake. I should be very sorry to state that there are five hundred in all the country from Waitara to Mokau.

12 Note. – In a former paragraph I remarked that "the Treaty of Waitangi has been, and is the incubus of New Zealand." I am aware that it was a Treaty of expediency, to secure to Government the preemption of the land, yet, nevertheless, it is the mainspring of distracting evils; it has had the unrighteous effect of withholding the fertile land from the colonist, and opposes the Divine command to till the soil. Moreover, the country hitherto purchased by the Government is, to a large extent, unavailable, and will prove useless for generations to come; and as the supply of good and available land is not equal to the demand, while there are millions of acres of the most fertile soil lying waste, I think any Treaty or Act so injurious to colonisation, civilisation, and the peace of society, should receive an opprobrious term, I see no hope for brotherly love and unity in this Colony if other than the spirit of the Treaty is carried out, which, in effect, will be infinitely more advantageous to the Aborigines than acting up to the letter.

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