



GOVERNMENT GAZETTE,

PROVINCE OF TARANAKI,

NEW ZEALAND.

Published by Authority.

NEW PLYMOUTH, SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1860.

Memorandum from the Superintendent of Taranaki to His Excellency Governor Browne.

The uncertainty as to the duration of the war in the province of Taranaki opens the question, how far it is proper to offer facilities for the departure of that part of the inhabitants not available for military service.

The whole civil population is about 2650 persons; all these are now concentrated within the town, except about 90, who occupy the Omata stockade and the Bell Blockhouse, and a small number attached to the camp at Waitara, or engaged in sawing and woodcutting.

The ordinary town population is 937 souls, and a part of this number reside, when at home, outside the protected part of the town. It may then be estimated, that 2500 persons are now occupying buildings which usually accommodate not more than 800. It is moreover reported on good authority that the Commander of the forces intends contracting the projected lines of defence, and should this be done, there would follow a fresh pressure on the centre from those settlers now living some

distance outside the new line of posts.

It is superfluous to dwell at any length on the risk of general and epidemic disease in such a state of things, for though the town is by no means densely built over, the number of persons occupying each room is far greater than is consistent with health.

More pressing still is the evil to public manners from such close assemblage of persons of different families. Habits of filth, and too great freedom of intercourse among the sexes, must inevitably grow fast and may be said to have begun already.

Of the 2650 persons forming the population

1167 are under 14 years of age,
682 females above that age,
33 males above 60 years,
128 between 14 and 18.

The remaining 640 are less than one quarter of the population, and when those are deducted whom special duties or infirmity render unfit for military service, the proportion becomes still smaller. This force, however, if mobilised would be of very great value in the event of protracted rebellion, from their familiarity with the

country and aptitude for operations in the forest. At present, however, this valuable arm of the service is paralysed by the pressure of 2000 persons, requiring protection in an unfortified place of large extent, the defence of which necessarily falls to a great extent on the militia.

In order to consider the financial side of the question some period must be assumed for the duration of the disturbance, and it will probably be right to assume that period at the maximum, which the resources of the hostile natives, and the probability of aid from the Imperial Government would allow. It is hardly likely in the worst event, the occasion, namely, of aid from the North to the war party, that hostilities can be kept on foot without intermission for beyond a year. The natives, shut up in the forest by an overpowering force in the open land, and harassed by irregulars in their retreats, can hardly be supposed to have subsistence for a longer time than twelve months. Taking this then as the limit of the war, and (what can hardly be hoped,) that the number of persons dependent on Government for support does not increase, there will be an expenditure of at least sixpence per head per diem, on 750 persons, or about £7000 in the year for rations, clothing and sundries. Further sums, hardly to be estimated below £1000, will be required for rent and other expenses, attendant on quartering these people, giving thus a total of £8000 for the maintenance of 750 persons, whose presence is a source of disability and weakness.

The number of families now on rations is 177; of these 79 number from 4 to 10 children each, with a total of 436, and an average of $5\frac{1}{2}$ to each family. On the present scale and price the rations to these families average 2s. 8d. per diem cost, or 1s. 1d. more than the pay and rations of a militiaman. It is probable that the Provincial Governments of the southern island would be willing to offer facilities to these families, sufficient to induce them to remove, if the heads of the families could be released from their militia duties. The crowded town would thus be relieved by the egress of 594 individuals, and the sum saved in pay, rations, and clothing, would be not less than five shillings per diem on each head of a family, a sum sufficient to enable His Excellency to raise by voluntary enlistment in this or the Australian colonies, an equal number of men free from incumbences.

With respect to the 1400 persons still to be protected, it is probable, that if the Government should charter vessels for the purpose, a large proportion might be in-

duced, by low fares and free passages, to remove for a time; and although the Government might be chargeable with rations for a large part of these, that cost would not be increased much by the removal, and the expense of their transport must be set off against the advantage of mobilising the whole militia force.

Of the 1400 last named, about 250 are in families not exceeding five persons, and averaging about $2\frac{1}{2}$ souls in each family. These and some others must in such case have free passage and rations, wherever their temporary asylums may be. A small number would prefer staying in the place. The remainder, from 700 to 1000, might be expected to be provided for without Government aid.

One more point remains to be referred to—the effect of the presence of these persons on the demand for provisions. It may be assumed that the price of flour, and other articles not perishable, would be unaffected by their presence or absence; but the item of meat must be greatly advanced in price, by the increase of numbers in the district; and when it is considered that the non-military part of the inhabitants, and that portion solely engaged in their protection, are something like three-fifths of the whole number that can be expected to be in the district for some time, putting the reinforcements expected at the highest, this point assumes great importance.

To recapitulate—Health and public morals require the removal of a large part of the women and children, before long, to some more suitable quarters. Financially—the removal of such part for a time, and the full liberty of permanent removal to some portion, would probably prove a gain rather than a loss. In a military point of view, such a removal would be equivalent to the addition of the whole militia to the effective force in His Excellency's hands.

On these grounds the Provincial Government thinks, that unless a thorough and immediate occupation of the open districts can be reckoned on, and the town and its neighbourhood rendered safe, without the anxious and harassing service now needed for its security, it would be advisable to take action for the general removal of the population incapable of military service, and they desire to be informed

Whether His Excellency would authorise them to provide free and reduced passages for such persons as are not enrolled in the militia or volunteer force, or engaged in necessary public service, to such places as may be suitable in the Southern Island.

Whether His Excellency would order the discharge of all persons from the militia

whose families exceed five souls, and who may desire to quit this province altogether.

Or what steps His Excellency would authorise, sanction, or recommend having the objects above indicated in view.

New Plymouth, 27th March, 1860.

His Excellency's Reply.

Before replying to the questions addressed to me, I think it right to inform you that there are now upwards of 800 fighting men and a considerable strength of artillery in the town, and that I expect a further reinforcement by the Airedale on her return from Auckland, consequently I consider the Town perfectly safe. I may also add that in less than a month from this time I expect a naval brigade and a considerable reinforcement of troops from Australia. Commodore Loring and Sir Wm. Denison having informed me by the last mail (in answer to letters written from Auckland) that they would be ready to forward them at a moment's notice.

The propriety therefore of moving the women and children should be considered on other grounds than those of safety.

There can be no doubt that a town of which the surrounding districts are likely to be the seat of war, is not a desirable residence for females of any class.

The crowded state of the town is likely to produce disease and to cause it to be more than ordinarily fatal.

It is also true that the men would be better fitted for their duty as soldiers if relieved from anxiety for their families.

Taking these matters into consideration (and without any reference to their safety) I think the removal of those females who can be supported and provided for by their friends would be desirable.

Persons not enrolled in the Militia, and unable to pay for their own removal, might be removed at the expense of Government: the ultimate expense remaining to be settled between the General and Provincial Governments. It will, however, be necessary to provide also for their future support.

The Airedale may be made available for this purpose on her return from Auckland, and the amount of payment may be arranged by the General Government.

The discharge of persons from the Militia does not depend on me, but in the cases of men having very large families, a special application might be made to the Colonel commanding, and would certainly meet with every attention, even if not acceded to.

New Plymouth,
28th March, 1860.

Nelson, Wednesday,

21st March, 1860, 4 o'clock p.m.

Sir,—I have the honor to transmit to you herewith copies of resolutions just passed at a Public Meeting held by the Inhabitants of this City, expressive of their sympathy towards the inhabitants of Taranaki, in which I beg to assure you I most sincerely participate.

The immediate departure of the mail, prevents my saying more than that I trust the vigorous measures taken by His Excellency the Governor to quell the disturbance, may be speedily successful, and that peace and happiness may soon be restored to the homes of yourself and fellow-settlers.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. P. ROBINSON.

His Honor the Superintendent
of Taranaki.

Resolutions passed at a Public Meeting held at the Masonic Hall, Nelson, on Wednesday, the 21st March, 1860.

1st. That this meeting, believing that its sympathy with our Taranaki fellow-colonists is fully shared by every individual in this Province, are of opinion that our Provincial Government would be acting in accordance with the wishes of the people of this Province by chartering the steamer "Tasmanian Maid" upon her return from Wairau and sending her to Taranaki to be placed at the disposal of the Governor, or the officer in command of the troops, should she be considered of service during the present hostilities,

2nd. That this meeting is of opinion that the people of this Province would be willing to receive and give a temporary asylum to any women, children, or disabled persons whom it would be necessary to send away from Taranaki for the relief of that settlement during the present hostilities, and that a committee consisting of the following gentlemen, with power to add to their number, be appointed to organize measures for relieving them:—

W. WELLS	A. KERR
W. T. L. TRAVERS	J. C. BARTLETT
M. BURY	O. CURTIS
J. LUCK	D. MONRO
L. NASH	J. CONNELL
J. ELLIOTT	J. LEWTHWAITE
N. EDWARDS	J. P. ROBINSON

3rd. That a copy of the Resolutions now passed be sent to His Honor the Superintendent of Taranaki.

J. P. ROBINSON,
Chairman.

Resolutions passed at a Public Meeting held at the Masonic Hotel, New Plymouth, on Tuesday, 27th March, 1860.

1st. This meeting cordially thanks the Superintendent and Inhabitants of Nelson, for their quick and warm sympathy with the people of Taranaki in their present difficulties; and feels that to place their mothers, wives, and children, in the kind custody of their brother colonists will relieve

them from a weight of anxiety and redouble their energies for the coming struggle.

2nd. This meeting is of opinion that the Superintendent should take all means in his power to effect such arrangements as may render the friendly offer of the Provincial Government and people of Nelson available for persons of all classes.

G. CUTFIELD,
Chairman.