

## No. 4.

LETTER from the COLONIAL SECRETARY to RIGHT. HON. LORD CHICHESTER.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Auckland, 4th May, 1864.

MY LORD,—

The letter which you and other noblemen and gentlemen connected with the Aborigines Society addressed to His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B., Governor of this Colony, in January last, has been referred by His Excellency to his Responsible Advisers.

They have submitted their opinions upon it to His Excellency, in the form of an Official Memorandum, of which, at His Excellency's suggestion, they have now the honour to forward a copy to you, and of which His Excellency will forward one to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

As the letter in which your Lordship and the other subscribers impugned the policy of confiscation, which the New Zealand Government has adopted, was published by you, at the date of its transmission to the Colony, in the *London Times*, and other newspapers, I venture respectfully to express a hope that you will give similar publicity to the enclosed Memorandum.

I have, &c.,  
WILLIAM FOX,  
Colonial Secretary.

The Right Hon. Earl Chichester,  
22, Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.

MEMORANDUM by MINISTERS in reply to Aborigines Protection Society, enclosed in No. 4.

1. Ministers have received a copy of the letter addressed to His Excellency the Governor by Lord Chichester and several other gentlemen connected with the "Aborigines Protection Society" in London relative to the war which is now raging in New Zealand between the Maoris and "their English rulers," on which they beg to make the following remarks.

2. The only two points in the letter which appear to call for any remark are. *First*, the hope expressed that His Excellency the Governor "would avail himself of the first favorable opportunity of endeavouring to terminate the war by negotiation, and especially that he would listen to any overtures of peace which any of the natives who have taken up arms might make," and *secondly*, a protest against the confiscation of the lands of the rebel tribes.

3. With regard to the first of these points, Ministers regret to state that down to this date, the rebels have not as a body, nor have any leading tribes, made the smallest overture of peace. At the commencement of the present unhappy struggle, they appear to have entertained a firm conviction that they could drive the Europeans out of the island, and they commenced by a desperate attack upon Auckland, the seat of Government. Early in the struggle, Thompson, who may be regarded as the leader of the rebel party, announced in writing under his own hand, his determination to carry the war to the utmost extremity, not even sparing unarmed persons. Acting in this spirit, the Maoris threw themselves into the heart of the settled districts of the Province of Auckland, murdering and destroying the settlers within 17 miles of the town, cutting down the Government flagstaff at the Manukau, the western harbour of the City of Auckland itself, and driving from their farms and homesteads a tolerably dense population of agricultural settlers over a space of some twenty miles square. So sudden was their onslaught, and so completely did they succeed in getting possession of the country close around Auckland, that it was not till after the fall of Rangiriri, five months at least after the struggle commenced, that they were driven back and routed out of the wooded ranges to such an extent that even the city and the immediate suburbs of Auckland could be considered safe. Since that period they have been driven or escaped from one stronghold after another till they have been compelled to evacuate the whole of the Waikato proper; they have retreated before our troops to a distance of 120 miles from Auckland, and their main body is understood to be broken into two or three sections, the principal of which appears to have descended upon Tauranga in the Bay of Plenty, where with the resident rebels of that district, they are again defying the British troops and throwing up aggressive works within a distance of three miles from our posts. During all this time they have not as a body shown the smallest symptom of any desire to terminate the war, nor have made any overtures of peace. On the contrary, they continue to make the most strenuous efforts to recruit their forces by enlistment among the East Coast Tribes, whom they encourage to join them by the most monstrous falsehoods, which are circulated by express authority of Thompson and the other leaders, and by means of which they have hitherto succeeded in deluding considerable numbers into a belief that the rebellion has been successful, and that they have only to join it to see the final establishment in triumph of the Maori King. (See Appendix A).

It is a well known fact that, in their inter-tribal wars, the Natives invariably regarded any overtures of peace as a sign that the party who makes it is beaten, that it is an acknowledgment of defeat. It is a matter, therefore, of the utmost delicacy to initiate such negotiations, as nothing could be more fatal to the prospect of actual peace than that the rebels should be able to announce to the distant or non-committed tribes that we had placed ourselves in that position. Such tentative efforts in that direction as the Government has thought it prudent to make, have at once been seized on by Thompson as indications of weakness, and he has, on various occasions, encouraged his followers (and no doubt it has operated to keep them in arms) by assurance that "the Governor and General are now suing for peace." The time, however, has now arrived, when, by the fall of Maungatautari, the last of the fortified strongholds of Waikato, the conquest of that district and its inhabitants is practically