

No. 16.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B., to the
Right Hon. EDWARD CARDWELL, M.P.

(No. 162.)

Government House, Wellington,
14th December, 1865.

SIR,—

In your Despatch No. 78, of the 25th of September last, which I had the honor to receive on the 8th instant, the following passage occurs, the intention of which clearly is to cast a censure upon me, which I am supposed to have deservedly merited:—"If, as soon as you knew that in the opinion of the "Officer commanding the troops your measures respecting the confiscation of "land would render the early withdrawal of any portion of the troops impossible, "you had acted upon this instruction, your opinions might have been sent home "several months ago, with those of General Cameron, and with your report upon "his observations." * * * *

2. This censure follows so evidently as a corollary from Sir D. Cameron's Despatch to Lord de Grey, of the 7th of January last (Parliamentary papers 6th April, 1865), that that Despatch must directly or indirectly have influenced the opinions on which originated the censure pronounced upon me.

3. In that Despatch General Cameron states as follows:—"I herewith "forward for your Lordship's information a copy of a Proclamation issued on the "17th ultimo, by His Excellency the Governor, by the advice of his Colonial "Ministers, in which it is announced to the Natives that the whole of the "territory from which they have been expelled in the Waikato is confiscated, and "that such land as the Governor may think fit to confiscate in the districts of "Taranaki and Whanganui will be taken from them.

"These measures will, in my opinion, render the early withdrawal of any of "the troops from this Colony impossible, as the extensive districts which have "been confiscated, and which it is proposed to confiscate, cannot be occupied and "defended by a smaller force than that which is now stationed in the Colony, "until either peace is made with the Natives or a population can be introduced "into those districts capable of taking part in their defence. I have considered "it my duty to communicate this opinion to Sir George Grey."

4. In order that you may understand the matter, I beg to make the following statement:—Upon the 16th December, General Cameron traced, for my Responsible Advisers, lines upon a map showing all the territory in the Northern part of the Northern Island of New Zealand which he thought "might fairly be "considered as conquered territory." Upon this map he wrote, "I consider that "all the rebel land included within the blue line, and to the North of it, may "fairly be considered as conquered territory, except that I think the Southern "boundary might be more correctly represented by a straight line from Pukekura "to Orakau, and from thence to the nearest point on the Punui River. (Signed) "D. A. Cameron. Auckland, 16th December, 1864."

5. It would have been very difficult for me, after the General in command of the Forces had thus authoritatively given his opinion to my Responsible Advisers as to what might fairly be regarded as conquered territory, to have refrained from adopting it. I think that, looking to the state of public opinion in this country at the time, and my whole position here at that moment, that General Cameron may fairly be said by this act on his part to have rendered the issue of my Proclamation of the 17th December a necessity from which I could not well escape.

6. How, then, General Cameron's measures (at least quite as much as mine) of what is called confiscation, could have been made a matter of complaint to the Secretary of State in the General's Despatch of the 7th January, I cannot understand; nor why, after what had taken place, I should have been left in ignorance that such a Despatch had been written.

7. You will observe that General Cameron, in his indorsement on the map, dated 16th December, named two boundaries of the territory which he regarded as conquered, one of which contained much more land than the other. You will also observe that in my proclamation of the 17th December, I named that one of