

“only to embark the 50th Regiment, now stationed in Queensland, New South Wales, and South Australia, and proceed with them direct to England.”

5. On the 28th February ultimo, two days later, another complication arose. I then received the enclosed letter from Major-General Sir T. Chute, sending me a copy of a telegram addressed to him by the War Department, to a similar effect with that addressed to the Naval authorities by the Admiralty, and directing the redistribution of the 14th Regiment in Australia on the removal thence of the 50th Regiment. General Chute further intimated that he had induced (in apparent contravention of both the letter and spirit of the instructions of Her Majesty's Government) the Captain of the “Himalaya” to proceed to New Zealand and remove one wing (five companies) of the 2-18th for distribution in Australia, leaving the other wing (also composed of five companies) at Auckland and Wanganui, in this Colony.

6. A few days later, on the 3rd March instant, a new phase appeared. I then received a second letter (of which also a copy is annexed) from Commodore Lambert, stating as follows:—

“Referring to my letter of the 20th ult., in which I had informed your Excellency that I had received a letter from Captain Piers, of H.M.S. ‘Himalaya,’ acquainting me that at Galle he had received a telegram from the Admiralty, directing him not to come to New Zealand, but proceed to Brisbane, Sydney, and Adelaide, and convey K.O. Regiment to Queenstown, I have now to inform you that, in consequence of the suggestion of the Major-General Commanding in the Australian Colonies, Captain Piers left Melbourne in Her Majesty's ship under his command on the 20th February, and arrived at this place on the 27th.

“As the instructions contained in the telegrams received at Galle by Captain Piers cancelled all former orders to him, he therefore ought not to have come here. I yesterday sent H.M.S. ‘Himalaya’ direct to Brisbane, with orders to proceed from thence, in pursuance of instructions received in the telegram above referred to.”

7. It is presumed here that the arrival in England of the tidings of the massacre in Poverty Bay in last November, and of the very dangerous position of affairs generally in this Colony, caused Her Majesty's Government to cancel the orders previously issued for the removal, in the “Himalaya,” of the single battalion which still garrisons (besides Auckland) the three chief towns in the disturbed districts (*i.e.*, Taranaki, Napier, and Wanganui), and thus, while providing a safe retreat for the wives and children of the settlers, sets free the Colonial forces to cope with the rebels in the field, in the terms of Lord Carnarvon's Despatch No. 10, of February 1st, 1867, “which, in effect, confines the Imperial troops to the duty of garrisoning the main centres of population, and leaves to the Colonial forces the conduct of active operations in unsettled or partially settled districts.”

8. I make no doubt that it is owing to some accident or miscarriage in the mail steamer or in the electric telegraph that no notice whatever of the orders cancelling the former instructions issued respecting the movements of the “Himalaya,” and the intended withdrawal of the 2-18th Regiment, has, up to this date, reached me. For it is naturally felt here (as it will also be felt elsewhere), that to leave the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of New Zealand (as I am styled in my Commission), wholly ignorant of the fresh orders issued to the Officers Commanding Her Majesty's Military and Naval Forces on this station respecting the removal or non-removal, at the present crisis, of the Queen's troops in this Colony, is to place him in a false position, and to lessen the proper authority and influence of his office as the Queen's Representative; and may, while relieving the Governor from all personal responsibility, still prove, in many ways, extremely prejudicial to the public service.

9. It will be seen that, on the 20th ult., I addressed Major-General Sir T. Chute in the following terms:—“I have the honor to acquaint you that Commodore Lambert has this day officially informed me that Her Majesty's Government has ordered the Captain of the ‘Himalaya’ not to proceed to New Zealand,