

ment. I requested Mr. Richmond to furnish me with an explanation for transmission to your Lordship; and I now enclose a copy of the letter which he has addressed to me on the subject.

3. It will be seen that the story of the payment for the head* is as follows:—

“A party of Arawas pursuing the enemy through the forest, after he had evacuated Ngatapa, killed, among others, the Chief Nikora, a leading man among the Hauhaus. Proud of his luck, the man who killed him cut off his head and brought it back to camp, and it was proposed to dry it in Maori fashion, and carry it about as a trophy. Hearing of this, and being anxious to prevent the broad distinctions in humanity and civilization between our own allies and the Hauhaus from being obliterated by the revival of such a practice, I rewarded the man and purchased the head by a sum of £50, directing that the head should be buried.”

4. It will be observed that Mr. Richmond further states that one of the Hauhaus captured at Ngatapa “was afterwards killed, as is universally believed, by a man whose child the Maori had barbarously butchered. An inquest was ordered on the body of the dead prisoner; but the jury returned an open verdict; and no evidence has been procurable of an act in which, under the excited circumstances of the times, every neighbour sympathized.” The case here referred to is that mentioned by Mr. J. C. Firth, of Auckland, in the 15th paragraph of his letter addressed to your Lordship on the 15th March ultimo, (transmitted with my Despatch No. 46, of the 7th April ultimo,) and into the facts of which I had desired (as I have already reported) that an inquiry should be made.

5. With regard to the general questions raised in your Lordship’s Despatch under reply, I beg permission to refer to several of my previous communications to the Colonial Office; and especially to the following paragraph of my Despatch No. 129, of the 18th December ultimo:—“It is often remarked by many of the most competent and experienced observers here, that the character of the war which has raged, with some periods of intermission, since 1860, is now changing to a lamentable degree. It is, unfortunately, impossible to disguise the fact that, during the last two or three years, and especially since the removal of the regular troops from all share in active operations in the field, the war is becoming—so far, at least, as regards a large portion of the Natives—not only a struggle of race against race, but also a deadly contest between, on the one hand, the rekindled passions of heathenism and cannibalism, and, on the other, Christianity and civilization. The ultimate issue of a contest of such a nature, here or elsewhere, cannot, of course, be doubtful. The English race must prevail in the end. But it is feared that if the Colonists and the loyal Native tribes should be entirely deprived of the aid and countenance of the Queen’s Troops, (in pursuance of the policy recently announced officially,) the existing contest will become a lingering and cruel struggle, in which it will be difficult to enforce, especially on our Maori allies, the usages of civilized warfare.”

6. I have no wish or intention to re-open here the correspondence about the Imperial Troops, on the entire removal of which I have been officially informed that Her Majesty’s Government has finally decided. Still less do I desire to take any credit for foreseeing,—what no one can have doubted,—that a mitigation of the inevitable horrors of barbarian warfare would not be found among the benefits expected from that removal. Cruel murders of men, women, and children, and other outrages too terrible for description, have been perpetrated by the Hauhaus, not only on the English settlers and their families, but also on those Maori tribes which have so long and so gallantly fought for the Crown. According to the traditional laws and customs of their race, the clansmen of the sufferers are bound to exact *utu* (the “vendetta” of Corsica) for these murders and outrages. Hence it was to be expected, however much it is to be deplored, that savage atrocities on the one side would lead to savage vengeance on the other side. I am informed that one of the loyal tribes recently refused to advance a second time against the rebels, because they had been prevented from putting summarily to death the

* As to the practice of carrying about the heads of slaughtered enemies, see the Despatch of the Governor of New Zealand to the Secretary of State, No. 49 of 1868, paragraph 13.