

murderers of their kinsmen, who had been taken prisoners in a previous engagement. It is also stated that it was with extreme difficulty that, on a late occasion the relatives of those Maoris whose bodies had been mutilated and devoured by the Hauhaus, were induced to refrain from indulging, in their turn, in a cannibal feast. I need scarcely add that the Colonial Government has done, and is doing, its utmost to prevent the recurrence of such horrors. But it will be recollected that warfare has been carried on during a portion of the last twelve months, by the Maori clans, in the almost impassable forests and mountains of the interior of this Island, at a distance of several hundred miles from the Seat of Government, and from the chief centres of the European population.

7. In addition to the remarks made by Mr. Richmond in the enclosed letter, respecting the Press of this Colony, I have been requested to observe that, in this as in all countries where party spirit runs high, it must be expected that the Ministers in power for the time being will be subjected to all kinds of attacks from their political opponents. Moreover, it will be remembered that, owing to the peculiar position of New Zealand, and the manner in which it was originally colonized, there is not here, as in each of the Australian Colonies, a capital which is the chief centre of population, and the head-quarters at once of politics, law, and commerce. Many of the provincial newspapers seem to be conducted with ability and intelligence; but as there is in fact no metropolis, so there is no metropolitan Press. I am informed, indeed, that the local newspapers are seldom read beyond the districts in which they are published; and that it is (generally speaking) as difficult to procure, for instance, an Auckland newspaper at Dunedin, or a Canterbury newspaper at Taranaki, as it would be to procure an Aberdeen newspaper at Exeter, or a Galway newspaper at York. It has been further observed here, that above eighty (80) newspapers are published in New Zealand, throughout a territory nearly equal in extent to the United Kingdom; and that (even if any great public advantage could be gained by such an effort) it would be impossible for any Minister or other public man in this Colony to keep himself informed of what is written about him in the journals of Hawke's Bay, (from which your Lordship has quoted,) and of the other eight Provinces of New Zealand; just as it would be impossible for any Minister or other public man at home to keep himself informed of what is written about him in the journals of any nine counties in the United Kingdom;—of Tipperary, Mayo, or Antrim in Ireland; of Dumfries, Caithness, or Fife in Scotland; or of Cumberland, Kent, or Cornwall in England. However, files of all the principal Colonial newspapers will continue, as heretofore, to be forwarded to the Colonial Office by every monthly mail, in pursuance of the standing instructions from that Department.

8. With regard to the concluding paragraph of the Despatch No. 43, in which your Lordship remarks as follows,—“I feel convinced that the Government of New Zealand does not consider that, under the circumstances of the Colony, the shooting of a prisoner would be justifiable merely because he had been in arms against Her Majesty,”—I have much pleasure in reporting that the present Ministry, and the leading politicians of all parties in this country, concur in this view, which I have always advocated, although a portion of the public and of the Press calls for a very different policy, and the most summary measures of repression. The truth is, that the Maori prisoners hitherto taken in open rebellion have not only had their lives spared, but have been so slightly guarded, that during the last five or six years they have all effected their escape not long after their capture;—the prisoners taken in the Waikato from Kawau; the prisoners taken on the West Coast from Wellington; and the prisoners taken on the East Coast from the Chatham Islands. It will be remembered that the rebels who perpetrated, in 1865, the cruel murders of Messrs. Volkner, Fulloon, and others, were tried before the Supreme Court in the ordinary course of law; and that five of their number were convicted and executed in pursuance of the sentence passed upon them by the Chief Justice (Sir George Arney). It is intended by the Colonial Government to place on their trial also the more prominent criminals recently captured; but it would be obviously improper to prejudice in any way, or even to anticipate, the future