

No. 3.

COPY of DESPATCH from the OFFICER ADMINISTERING the GOVERNMENT of NEW ZEALAND to the Right Hon. the Earl of KIMBERLEY.

(No. 37.)

Government House, Wellington,

MY LORD,—

New Zealand, 7th May, 1873.

In my Despatch No. 36, of even date herewith, I intimated that I would inform your Lordship of the course which the Government of the Colony has taken, and is still taking, in dealing with the case of the murder of Timothy Sullivan by a party of Natives on the 24th ultimo.

Placed, in the Seat of Government, at a long distance from the Waikato, and depending on telegrams wholly for information, the Government at once directed an experienced Native Commissioner, Mr. Mackay, to repair to the spot. Mr. Mackay repaired thither, and placed himself in communication with Tana Te Waharoa, Hote te Waharoa, Erueti, Ropata Mohi, and other influential Native chiefs, through whom he was able to communicate indirectly with the chiefs immediately about Tawhiao. The principal of them are Manuhiri and Rewi. Manuhiri is a chief of years and of long-standing influence, an influence, however, which has not been favourable to Her Majesty's Government; and we are informed that when told of the murder of Sullivan, Manuhiri did not condemn it, but would not attend to the speaker, saying, merely, it was not his business. Erueti also reported that the Tekaumarua (or council of twelve) of the King had been coming to inquire into the matter, but had changed their minds, at the same time indicating that the adherents of the King did not approve of the murder of Sullivan. Ropata Mohi also declared that if the murderers were taken, the King would not interfere; and Mr. Mackay was afterwards informed by another Native chief that Manuhiri condemned the murder, as did all the people of the King. At length Mr. Mackay wrote a cautiously-worded letter to Tawhiao, assuring him that his proceedings were being taken at the request of the Government, that peace might be maintained, and that the guilty should alone atone his offence, but asking Tawhiao to declare his opinion of the person who murdered the pakeha. Not receiving an immediate answer, Mr. Mackay ventured on the bold step of going in person, accompanied by friendly chiefs, to Tawhiao's own place. The progress and arrival of Mr. Mackay at Tawhiao's residence, his treatment, and all that has happened thereupon, so far as we are yet informed, your Lordship will best gather by reading the two telegrams from Mr. Mackay, copies of which accompany this Despatch. Your Lordship will not fail to recognize in Mr. Mackay a man of remarkable courage and firmness, who, instead of being discomfited by the attack upon his life, seeks, and even trusts, to make that attack conducive to the good of the Government and of the Colony by leading up to the object which he is especially charged to accomplish, that of prevailing with Tawhiao and the King party to submit unauthorized murders (viz., those homicides which Tawhiao himself repudiates) to trial before the Courts of Justice. Rewi, who has taken Mr. Mackay under his personal protection, is a chief whose influence, we have reason to hope, perhaps to believe, is exercised in favour of Her Majesty's Government. He is chief of the powerful Ngatimaniapoto, on whom the power of Tawhiao mainly rests; and we are informed by telegram from Major Mair, from Alexandra, that, on taking Mr. Mackay to his house, Rewi is reported to have made use of an expression to the effect that, "If Ngatimahuta (Tawhiao's tribe) wanted to kill the pakeha, they had better come to him." Rewi lives also on terms of friendship with the young chief Tu Tawhiao (the Maori King's son), whom I met at Kawhia on the 1st ult., as mentioned in a former Despatch, and he is, we hope, disposed to relax that exclusive isolation imposed upon himself and his followers by the policy of Tawhiao and Manuhiri. If Rewi should be induced to guarantee that Ngatimaniapoto will not interfere in arms to prevent the capture of Sullivan's murderers by the authorities of the Crown, one main obstacle to the immediate action of the Government will be removed. Up to the present time, and beyond the limits of the King district, we have no reason to believe that this outrage is countenanced by any influential section of the Native race. I forbear troubling your Lordship with the numerous telegrams which report the indignation expressed by individual chiefs, and their