

No. 4.

(Confidential.) COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor GREY to the Right Hon. Earl GREY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Auckland, 13th May, 1847.

In reference to my confidential despatch to your Lordship of the 3rd instant, reporting my intention of delaying, until I had received your further instructions, the introduction of the proposed representative institutions into that portion of the colony which is most densely inhabited by Natives, I now beg to state that the intelligence recently received from the neighbourhood of Wanganui, which I have detailed in my Despatch No. 58, of the 11th instant, viewed in connection with the proposed introduction of the new form of Government, has made me feel more anxious than any occurrences which have previously taken place in this country.

The object of the older chiefs has always been to draw back the mass of the Native population to their old barbarous customs, on which alone the authority of their chiefs rested. These old customs of the Natives are probably the most murderous and horrible which have ever existed in the world, and I cannot but dread that if any steps are taken which should unite a large proportion of the Native population against us, no middle course will be left to the discontented, but they will be obliged to join their heathen countrymen, and fall back into the depths of barbarism; in this event the atrocities which would be committed upon the scattered European population of this country, whom no force could protect, would be of the most dreadful kind. Unfortunately also at the present moment the excitement which I had always feared would take place when the Europeans began to occupy the tracts which had been irregularly purchased under the penny-an-acre Proclamation, or which had been illegally granted under the system of extended grants, is beginning to show itself, and forms another ground of difference between the two races, which nothing but the most prompt and decided measures can check. Upon the whole, the present state of the country is I feel such as fully requires me to weigh carefully every step I may have to take in introducing the new Constitution into this colony, and to require me rigidly to adhere to the course of policy I have, in my confidential despatch of the 3rd instant, informed your Lordship I should pursue. I think that perhaps until this country is a little more settled down, your Lordship's views with regard to the government of it might be fully met if it were, as proposed, divided into two colonies, with such a General Executive Government, and Executive Government for each colony, as is now provided for in the recent Charter and Instructions; whilst for the present the legislative body of each colony should consist of one Chamber, composed of the Governor and official and unofficial members, the latter of whom might, in the southern colony, be at once elected by the people. The General Assembly might then in like manner consist of one Chamber, composed of all the members of the Legislative Council of each colony, and its meetings, mode of proceeding, &c., might all be conducted in the manner which is proposed.

If your Lordship should, under the disturbed circumstances of the colony, think proper to send out modified instructions to this or some similar purport, they would yet reach me in sufficient time.

I feel very great diffidence in making such suggestions to your Lordship, but at the present moment the great mass of the Native population is on our side, as the fact of their seizing the murderers at Wanganui and giving them up to justice fully shows, and I think, if nothing occurs now to alarm the Natives, that, after two or three more years of peace and tranquillity, the colony may be regarded as quite safe, and the lives and properties of the settlers would be in a state of complete security; whilst, upon the other hand, I cannot but view with the greatest alarm and anxiety the possibility of the frequent and extended recurrence of such scenes as that which recently took place at Wanganui. Until your Lordship's further instructions reach me I will proceed as rapidly as is practicable with the adjustment of all those difficulties which have arisen from the penny-an-acre Proclamation, and from the extended grants of land. I will also introduce, in the most conciliatory manner, all those portions of the new form of Government which confer real and lasting advantages upon this country of the most undoubted and obvious kind, such as the division of the colony, &c.; so that, even in the event of your Lordship determining upon the immediate and complete introduction of the whole of the proposed new form of Constitution, every preparation in my power shall be made for such a measure, and it is certain that, after so many difficulties have been removed, the country will be in a much better state for such an experiment than it is at present.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Earl Grey, &c.

G. GREY.

No. 5.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor GREY to the Right Hon. Earl GREY.

(No. 70.)

MY LORD,—

Government House, Auckland, 7th July, 1847.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's Despatch No. 23, of the 23rd of December last, transmitting the new Charter for the Government of New Zealand, the Queen's Instructions under the Royal Signet and Sign-Manual, to which that Charter refers, and my own Commission as Governor-in-Chief of New Zealand and as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of each of the provinces into which these Islands will be divided.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express the sense I entertain of the confidence which Her Majesty has been pleased to repose in me in nominating me to these appointments, and to return my thanks to your Lordship for having mentioned me so favourably to the Queen. I beg, at the same time, to assure your Lordship that I will make every exertion to render your Lordship's views in reference to New Zealand as productive of prosperity and happiness to this country as your Lordship desires them to be.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Earl Grey, &c.

G. GREY.