

3. The Premier will direct that important official communications from or to Mr. Bryce or Colonel Roberts be sent to him, so that they may be forwarded for His Excellency's information.  
October 22nd, 1881.

JOHN HALL.

### No. 5.

His Excellency Sir A. H. GORDON to the SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES.

MY LORD,

Government House, Wellington, October 22, 1881.

On the 13th ultimo I left Auckland for Fiji. At that time, affairs upon the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand were in much the same state as for many months past. No serious difficulty was apprehended from them, and the Premier expressly telegraphed to me, the day before I sailed from Auckland, that there was "no cause whatever for postponing" my departure.

2. On the 4th instant, whilst at Levuka, I received intelligence that two days after I left Auckland, the Government began to entertain alarm as to the condition of affairs; that the Constabulary Force had been largely augmented; that the Taranaki settlers were being enrolled and armed; that the Minister of Defence had, on the 21st September, asked for and obtained from the House of Representatives a vote of credit for £100,000; and that war with the Maoris was regarded as almost inevitable. This intelligence I obtained from a letter written by my Private Secretary, and from a perusal of the New Zealand newspapers, not a single member of the Ministry having addressed a single line to me on that or any other subject.

3. Although I was unable to learn that any new or unexpected action on the part of the Natives had given rise to these feelings of uneasiness, it was clear that a great change in the views of the Government must have taken place since my departure, and that the situation had become in the highest degree critical. I therefore determined to abandon, unfinished, what remained of the work which had brought me to Fiji, and to return at once to New Zealand.

4. I reached Wellington between 10 and 11 o'clock on the night of the 19th instant, but found that at between 8 and 9 o'clock on the same evening, the Administrator, Sir James Prendergast, had issued a proclamation, a copy of which is enclosed in my despatch of the 20th instant, giving fourteen days' notice to Te Whiti and the Parihaka Natives to accept the conditions of the Government, and had re-appointed, as Native Minister and Minister of Defence, the same Mr. Bryce whose "vigorous" policy the Cabinet had in January declined to sanction, but whose views appear now to be in the ascendant.

5. At the time these steps were taken, I was myself within the territorial limits of the colony, and a question has been raised whether, this being the case, the acts performed by Sir J. Prendergast were not invalid. It would be so inconvenient were acts performed in good faith to be invalidated by the unknown return of the Governor to the colony, that I cannot conceive it possible that the Administrator's functions should expire before he becomes aware of the fact. The doubt, however, having been suggested, I have thought it better to refer it to your Lordship for resolution.

6. On meeting the members of the Executive Council on the morning of the 20th instant, I at once asked for a statement of the causes which had led to so great a change of policy and action. Such a statement in writing has been promised me by the Premier, but has not yet been placed in my hands. When it is so, I shall be better able to judge how far I am prepared to accept the consequences of measures to which I have been no party, and the justice and expediency of which as yet appear to me very doubtful. See No. 6 and its Enclosure.

7. Until I have carefully weighed the facts to be alleged by the Government, I suspend the formation of any decisive judgment, but, so far as the circumstances are yet before me, I am greatly disposed to share the views expressed in the enclosed extracts from the *Lyttelton Times*, which I think are well worth your Lordship's notice. I should, however, add that I believe the sentiments they express to be those of a but inconsiderable minority, and that the Cabinet will be supported in its "vigorous" action by nine-tenths of the white population of the colony.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Earl of Kimberley, &c.

ARTHUR GORDON.

P.S.—The latest news from the West Coast forwarded to me since concluding my despatch is conveyed in a telegram received by Ministers. Your Lordship will observe that this telegram, a copy of which is enclosed, contains an account of the delivery of the Proclamation to Te Whiti.

A. H. G.

[Enclosures 1 to 4 are extracts from the *Lyttelton Times*.]

### Enclosure 5.

Telegram from Mr. W. J. BUTLER to the Hon. W. ROLLESTON.

22nd October, 1881.

MR. CARRINGTON and I proceeded to Parihaka to-day, shortly after my arrival here. At the entrance to the marae we were met by Te Whiti's policeman, who took me by the hand and said, "Come this way, I will lead you. We have been expecting an officer to-day." And he conducted us to the whare called Taewa Pirau, the same in which your interview with Te Whiti took place. The whare was crowded. We entered, Te Whiti being near the doorway, with Rangi Puawheawhe, and Tohu next him. About 150 other men altogether inside and near the door.

Te Whiti received us in the most friendly manner, and after some ordinary conversation, I handed him the Proclamation. After carefully examining the address, he handed it to Rangi, who read it aloud in perfect silence to about the middle of the last paragraph, when Te Whiti said, "That will do, read no more." After a short silence, I said, "Have you any message for me to take?" Taking the