

Coral Sea, been into the interior of China and Japan [and climbed Fujiyama], crossed the United States, visited Mexico, travelled in Canada, voyaged up the Nile, camped with the Beduins in the plains of Arabia, and hunted in the forests of Ceylon.'⁴

In 1876, six years before he came to New Zealand, he had read a paper to the Glasgow meeting of the British Association on his New Hebrides exploration during which he had ascended the 'volcano of Tanna'.⁵ When at Taupo he tried to repeat beneath the Huka Falls his American feat of walking from one side of Niagara to the other between the water and the cliff. A rock rib rising vertically 'under the centre of the shoot' defeated him.⁶ On his return he wrote to the African explorer, Colonel J. A. Grant, an officer of the Royal Geographical Society, on the strength of earlier acquaintance, advising that he was back after five years of wandering in the southern hemisphere. Grant in a letter to the Secretary of the Society suggested that Kerry-Nicholls be given a 'night' to present his New Zealand material. Grant who had met him about 1877 or 1878 when Kerry-Nicholls was putting forward plans for a trans-African telegraph, considered him 'a *very* capable man—pleasant and intelligent'.⁷ Nicholls in a letter to Bates in July 1887 referred to his 'many hard days of travel' in Australia before crossing to New Zealand.⁸

He seems to have arrived here before the close of the 1882 Parliamentary session on 12 September and almost immediately approached Sir George Grey for help in his mission. Coincidentally, James Bryce, Minister for Native Affairs, was about to meet Tawhiao at Whatiwhatihoe in yet another round of talks on measures which would ease Waikato bitterness over land confiscation and other grievances. The Amnesty Act, passed at the end of the session, extended an unconditional pardon to all Maoris for 'offences' committed during the wars, with a provision to exclude some if necessary.⁹ It was most desirable that there should be no exceptions and, with this in mind, Bryce was anxious to receive assurances of good conduct from Te Kooti before the issue of the Proclamation—which he did—to prepare the way for the Main Trunk surveys in the New Year. It would be politic for Kerry-Nicholls to attend if he could, obviously not under the wing of Bryce, but with any other support he could muster to secure permission for his own journey through the King Country. Grey wrote to Tawhiao on his behalf which action Nicholls acknowledged from Finch's Hotel Alexandra (i.e. Pirongia) on 31 October.¹⁰ The meeting was a valuable introduction to the region's Maori leaders, to tribal protocol and custom. The King was sympathetic but thought that other business matters should be concluded before the traveller was given formal permission to