

found you at the Kohokohe, I should have gone and talked to the chiefs of the army. I intend now to return, and to-morrow I am going back to Taranaki.

They said: It is right.

I started to return at 2 p.m. and arrived in Auckland at 11 p.m.

JOHN HOBBS.

No. 12.

COPY OF DESPATCH FROM GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE GREY, K.C.B., TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF
NEWCASTLE, K.G.

No. 37.

Taranaki, New Zealand,

April 6th, 1863.

MY LORD DUKE,—

Your Grace will remember that after a war with the Natives had been for some time carried on here, and this Province had, with the exception of the Town, been almost ruined, the terms of a treaty were dictated by the Government, and the troops were removed to Auckland, with the exception of the small number required for the Defence of this Town, and to hold two small blockhouses near the Waitara river.

2. In the meantime the Waikato tribes, whose territory commences about forty miles from Auckland, were required to comply with certain conditions, and were given to understand that if they did not accept them, an expedition would be undertaken into their country to punish them, and with this object a considerable Military force was collected about seven miles from Auckland on the Waikato side. The tribes inhabiting the district abutting on that river, were excessively incensed at this, they would not comply with the conditions which had been named, and prepared themselves for war, and a general conspiracy was formed amongst the Native Tribes for a simultaneous attack on all the European settlements the moment that we attempted to attack the Waikato country.

3. Whilst these events were taking place a Commissioner, Mr. Rogan, was sent down to carry out the terms of the treaty which had been dictated to the Natives at Taranaki. They laughed at these terms, and desired him to quit their country, or he might lose his life.

4. Things were in this state when I arrived in New Zealand; I soon found that from the dense forests, and impassable swamps which intervened between Auckland and the country inhabited by the Waikato tribes, and from the want of Roads or other means of communication, it was impossible to commence operations against them with any hopes of success. On the contrary, they had become so confident in their own strength and resources, and were so encouraged and emboldened by the events of the recent war, that the question was, how we could protect the country round Auckland from the attack they might, at any moment, make on it, and which they were certain to make if we began a war at Taranaki or in any other part of the North Island.

5. If I had, under these circumstances, commenced to agitate any questions with the Natives of the Province of Taranaki, we should have been resisted; a general war would have taken place, and not one of the European settlements in New Zealand being in a state of preparation for such a war, one or more of them must have been involved in the same sad ruin as had already befallen the unfortunate Province of Taranaki.

6. The only proper proceedings appeared therefore to me, to be to take no measures which could irritate the Native people or justify them in commencing a general war, and yet, as the Waikato Tribes were evidently the head and front of this great and general conspiracy against us, gradually and surely to take measures, which would not only place the settlement of Auckland in a state of fair security against them, but would place us in a position which would enable us with just hopes of success to strike a blow at them if they deserved punishment, and at the same time so to threaten them, that if we ever required to take measures against the Natives elsewhere, they would hardly venture to detach any considerable force to aid such people, when a force capable of readily invading their territories lay at their own doors. When this end was gained I could hope to speak to the people of Taranaki, with confidence that I should be listened to, and that the measures I might think it necessary to take for the future security of the settlers here would be acquiesced in, at least without resistance, if not cheerfully. A part of this plan of proceedings, was to act with the strictest justice and generosity towards the Natives, to give them no just cause of complaint, and to show clearly by our acts, that the object aimed at, was the peace and security of the country, not future war against the Natives if it could possibly be avoided.

7. I have in other Despatches detailed to your Grace how, with a view of attaining these ends, Lieutenant-General Cameron, at my request, was with great energy pushing on, with all the means at his disposal, a military road through the forests and swamps which lay between Auckland and the Waikato river, and how our outposts were gradually being established in strength on the Banks of the river at a point which nearly cut it in half, and gave us a great command over it, and how arrangements had been made for placing an armed steamer upon it, which would enable us, if unhappily such a course became necessary, to undertake operations with facility and fair prospect of success.

8. The two principle Native questions to be settled at Taranaki were, to re-occupy two Blocks of territory, the Omata Block and the Tataraimaka Block, distant respectively about seven miles and twelve miles south-west of New Plymouth, from which the settlers, after many years peaceful occupation of them, had been driven by the Natives in the late war, and which they had not since been able to