

Right Honourable E. Cardwell, M.P., those letters having been now printed in Papers presented to both Houses of Parliament by Her Majesty's command.

It appears that the letters I allude to are on record amongst the archives of the Colonial Department in London, and that, deeply as myself and those who were lately my Responsible Advisers are interested in their contents, they were never communicated to me. Indeed, from the communications made to me, I believed that what now appears, from Mr. Weare's first letter, to have been facts undoubtedly personally known by Colonel Weare, were only vague statements and allegations resting upon camp rumours.

I find that Colonel Weare states positively, in a letter recorded in the Colonial Department, but never communicated to this Government, that the Major-General himself told Colonel Weare "that the Colonial Government did not want the expense of prisoners;" that in consequence of this desire on our part, the General ordered that no prisoners should be taken; that such brutal cruelties were in consequence committed that young officers were ready to cry, and that the finest and most gallant officers were disgusted at being lowered into Colonial butchers. These facts are detailed in the printed extracts from Colonel Weare's letter, and rest on his own personal knowledge. His brother, the Rev. Mr. Weare, asks for a personal interview with the Secretary of State, at which he states he can furnish evidence to show that the orders given had ended in deliberate murders. What this evidence was does not appear; this, however, is shown, that Mr. Weare, in his subsequent letters, admits that he was not in possession of such evidence, nor does he ever retract or qualify a single statement he has made. On the contrary, he re-affirms that atrocities had been committed in New Zealand, but asks to be allowed to withdraw his letters because he had not his brother's suggestion, privity, or authority for having communicated them to the Government.

It thus stands on record in your Grace's department, on the direct authority of an officer of rank, that it is within his personal knowledge that the Major-General commanding the Troops in New Zealand gave up myself and my Responsible Advisers as being the real authors of the atrocities which are stated to have been committed, and that from the low motive of not wanting the expense of prisoners. This statement is quite contrary to that made by the Major-General in his letter to the Under Secretary of State for War of the 9th of June, 1866; and between himself and Colonel Weare must rest the explanation of their contradiction of each other on so important a point. But what I would submit to your Grace is, that what has now come out affords a complete justification for my Minute in the Executive Council of the 23rd of May, 1866, and for my Despatch of the 30th of June, 1866, as also for my respectfully declining to recall that Minute and Despatch when required to do so under what I regarded, I believe rightly, as a threat of removal from my Government if I did not comply with the demand made.

In fact the whole matter has been misunderstood in the Colonial Department. Your Grace will, I feel sure, see this if you will look at the papers. You will find that Lord Carnarvon in writing to me on this case on the 1st of November, 1866, and requiring me to withdraw what I had written regarding it, says:—

"In the next place it is no doubt the practice of the Colonial Service to discourage the transmission of representations from a Colony otherwise than through the Governor, by sending back such representations to those who make them. In the value of that rule, both to the Secretary of State in England and to British authorities acting in distant parts of the world, I entirely concur; but it would be merely vexatious to apply such a rule to communications received from persons in this country. In such cases the practice is, as reason requires, to send the communication at once to the Governor for his explanation or report, and to take no decision (except in matters of exceptional urgency) till that report is received. This practice was accurately adhered to by my predecessor in the case of Mr. Weare's complaints."

Your Grace will see from what has preceded, that, at the very time this was written to me, the letter from Mr. Weare, which had caused me to write that for which I was censured, was on record in the Colonial Department, and had never been sent to me, nor had a copy of Colonel Weare's statements been enclosed to me. I was left in ignorance of much it was essential for me to know, that I might have properly defended my Government; and I had no idea that it was on record in the Colonial Department that Mr. Weare was able to furnish evidence to show that deliberate murders had been committed, for which myself and the Colonial Ministers appeared to have been directly responsible. Had I known that which I now do, and which I was certainly entitled to know at once, I should have taken steps in this matter wholly different to those which I actually adopted.

His Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos.

I have, &c.,
G. GREY.