

reefs were discovered near the mouth of the River Thames; and that the town of Shortland has sprung up there, as towns grow in the vicinity of the Gold Fields of Australasia—almost with the rapidity of the prophet's gourd. Nearly six thousand mining licenses have been issued; and the population of the new town and its vicinity is already estimated at eight thousand souls. I shall forward, periodically, returns of the gold exported from this and from the Southern Gold Fields in New Zealand.

3. I annex a brief account of my visit, which has been published by the local correspondents of the Auckland journals. There is one peculiar and very interesting and suggestive fact connected with the town of Shortland, viz., that it is arising on ground belonging to the influential Maori chief Taipari. He declines to sell his land; preferring, with a view to its rapid increase in value, to let it in lots on building leases. But he has made liberal gifts of sites for churches for the Anglicans, the Roman Catholics, the Presbyterians, and the other principal Christian communions; as also for a public hospital, a cemetery, a park, and other public purposes. He employs Europeans to survey and lay out roads and streets, and to construct drains, culverts, and the like. In short, he appeared to me, on the one hand, as capable of maintaining his just rights, and, on the other, as desirous to improve his property, as any English landlord. Taipari's income, from rents and mining licenses, is already at the rate of nearly £4,000 sterling yearly. He has caused a commodious house, in the English style, to be built for himself on a slope commanding a beautiful prospect over the sea and the rising town. Taipari's example, and the knowledge of the wealth which he is acquiring by allowing the Colonists to occupy his land on equitable terms, are beginning to exercise a beneficial influence over many of his Maori countrymen who have hitherto lived in sullen and hostile isolation.

4. I had at first intended to limit my tour, on this occasion, to the Gold Fields; but, while I was at Shortland, I learned that a large meeting of Maoris, composed partly of loyal tribes, and partly of Hauhau fanatics, adherents of the so called Maori king, had assembled at Ohinemuri, about thirty miles up the River Thames; with the object, principally, of consulting whether the miners should be permitted to search for gold in that quarter. I was advised by the Government officers, and others best qualified to judge on a subject of this nature, that much public benefit might result from my proceeding, without notice, to the place of meeting; not to treat expressly of public affairs, but, as it were, to receive, on behalf of the Queen, the homage of the assembled Natives; many of whom had been recently in arms against the Crown. Accordingly, I went up the River Thames in a small Government steamer, and anchored off the Maori encampment, which presented a very picturesque sight, with the flags and streamers of the several tribes flying over their tents. After a slight hesitation all these flags were lowered before the Governor's flag; and I was invited by a deputation of chiefs to come ashore. I landed amid general shouts and songs of welcome from the Hauhaus as well as from the friendly Natives; and was conducted to a seat placed for me in the centre of the camp. On my right and left were ranged about four hundred of the loyal Ngatimaru and other tribes; while immediately in front was a nearly equal number of Maoris who were engaged against the Government in the late war. The customary war dance, equivalent to a military guard of honor elsewhere, was led by Taraia, the famous old chief of the Ngatitameras, who presided over the last great cannibal feast held (in 1843) in New Zealand, and who is one of the few survivors of times and manners which have now well-nigh passed away. Taraia afterwards excused himself to me for his indifferent dancing, which he ascribed to his fourscore years, and not to any want of loyalty on his part. On the conclusion of the war dance, I was addressed in the usual fashion, by the leading Maoris present, in a series of speeches; of which, as also of my reply, an abstract will be found in the enclosure. It will be seen that the Hauhau chiefs avoided committing themselves expressly to any particular course of policy; but, since my return to Auckland, I have been assured that my visit and the short speech which I addressed to the meeting has produced a favourable impression, and has paved the way to several arrangements and concessions calculated to preserve the peace of the district, and to extend the authority of the