

No. 50.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G., to the
Right Hon. Earl GRANVILLE, K.G.

(No. 38.)

Government House, Auckland,

MY LORD,—

New Zealand, 1st April, 1870.

The first mail *via* San Francisco will be closed at Auckland to-morrow, and I have the honor to transmit by it a Memorandum from Mr. McLean, briefly reporting the progress of events here during the past month.

2. Soon after the departure from Auckland, on the 17th instant, of the last mail *via* Suez, news reached Mr. McLean that Te Kooti had made a sudden raid from the Urewera Mountains against Opape, a small settlement of friendly Natives about eight miles to the south-east of Opotiki, in the Bay of Plenty. It will be seen from the enclosed Memorandum, that most of the able-bodied men belonging to the settlement were absent on an expedition under Major Kemp (Te Kepa); but that Te Kooti “took about one hundred and fifty (150) men, women, and “children (all friendly Maoris) prisoners.” “Their fate (Mr. McLean reports) “is not yet known, but it is expected that most of the men will be massacred.”

3. It will be remembered that Mr. Justice Johnston, in his address to the Jury at the trials of some of the followers of Te Kooti before the Supreme Court, at Wellington, in last September, made (among other language to the same purport) the following statements:—“We have positive evidence as to the intention “of Te Kooti, from what he repeatedly said in the hearing of persons at times “antecedent to that at which their men voluntarily took a part in his acts. “Gentlemen, if there were no other purpose that this trial could serve than this, “it is well that the Colony, the Mother Country, the world, should know that the “deliberately avowed and repeated intention of Te Kooti was—as it has been “expressed, and I shall use no language of rhetoric to characterize the expression “—to annihilate the *momokino*, the ‘bad breed.’ On pressing the matter, and “questioning the witnesses as to what Te Kooti meant by the ‘bad breed,’ and “what was understood by it by his followers, it became a clear matter of fact that “the ‘bad breed’ did not mean this man or that, it did not mean the Pakeha, the “foreigner merely, but the Government people of both races. Throughout the “whole disastrous events, both the language and the actions of this party showed “that their attacks were levelled against those who supported the Government. “What Government that was, there can be no doubt. It was the Government of “Her Majesty in the Colony. Therefore, I say, this is so pregnant and important “a fact that, if nothing else resulted from this trial, your long detention from “your homes, the inconvenience you have been put to, and which you have borne “so patiently and intelligently, would be but little in your estimation compared “with establishing the fact before the world that such are the intention and “meaning of those persons who, I am sorry to say, are still, as far as we know, “in more or less active insurrection against the Government. The importance of “the trial in this respect, of course, so far from tending to prejudice the prisoners “at the bar, would have rather a contrary effect; for I say, notwithstanding the “perhaps justifiable observation of the Attorney-General, that, to my mind, what “becomes of these three men is comparatively insignificant to the great fact which “this trial will probably establish, that as far as regards the circumstances of that “portion of the Colony with which this case is connected, the Government has “not been acting otherwise towards the hostile Natives than for the maintenance “of the peace of the country, and that Te Kooti and his followers have not set up “the pretence of a grievance done to them.

“Much has been said during the trial as to the relevancy of particular facts “towards establishing the general conclusion charged in the indictment; but, “having paid due attention to the suggestions of the learned counsel for the “defence, I have not seen my way to disallowing any part of the evidence as to “events—from the landing at Whareongaonga to the taking of Ngatapa— “because, to the best of my judgment, all the acts appeared to be done in “pursuance of one common design—perhaps originally instituted by Te Kooti, “but carried out by him and his followers, of whom were two of the prisoners