

of both, though differing considerably in character, appeared to me to be enlightened and vigorous. With the improvements of the means of interior communication, which a few years will accomplish, a greatly increased rate of progression may be anticipated, and a constantly extending field for industrial employment.

5. At the end of January I left Invercargill in my yacht, on a visit to the Sounds on the south-west coast, from which my return has been delayed beyond my intentions by the extremely unfavourable winds which I encountered.

6. I propose, during the months of March, April, and May, to reside for some time in Auckland, and to visit the Provinces of Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Nelson, and Marlborough; also the peculiarly Native districts. I also intend to inspect the local military forces of the North Island.

I have, &c.,

JAMES FERGUSSON,

Governor.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Kimberley.

No. 26.

COPY of DESPATCH from Governor the Right Hon. Sir J. FERGUSSON, Bart.,
to the Right Hon. the Earl of KIMBERLEY.

(No. 10.)

Government House, Wellington,

MY LORD,—

New Zealand, 20th February, 1874.

I have the honor to inform you that some little excitement has been caused in the Colony, and some strongly worded articles in newspapers have appeared, with reference to the pardon and embarkation for America of one Sullivan, who was convicted of murder in the year 1866. It has moreover been represented that the Government have shipped off this person to America in order that the Colony might be rid of him, and it has been stated in newspapers that some persons who disapproved of that course have telegraphed to America in order that his landing there might be prevented.

2. As a matter of fact, the man in question, who had embarked on board of the mail steamer from Dunedin for San Francisco, having been recognized on board, quitted the vessel when she called at Auckland. But my Advisers think it possible that some complaint, founded upon the allegation above mentioned, may reach Her Majesty's Government, and desire that I should inform your Lordship of the facts of the case.

3. In 1866 a series of murders were committed upon travellers in the neighbourhood of the gold fields in Westland and Nelson, and upon the disappearance of four persons near the town of Nelson, suspicion of their murder was attached to four men, who were arrested. But the bodies of the missing persons not having been found, a proclamation was issued by the Governor, promising a pardon to any one but the actual murderers who would give evidence leading to their conviction. A copy of this proclamation was placed within that part of the prison where the suspected men were confined. Accordingly, one of them made a full statement of the murder of the missing persons by the gang to which he belonged, and indicated the place at which the bodies would be found. Upon the trial of his three companions, they were convicted and subsequently executed. He was an important witness for the Crown.

4. His confessions, however, were so unreserved, that he also detailed the circumstances of the separate murders of two other persons by the same gang while he was connected with it; and with reference to one of these, he was himself put upon his trial upon his own confession, and sentenced to death, that sentence being commuted by the Governor to penal servitude for life. Upon his trial he made no defence, relying, apparently, on the proclaimed promise of pardon, although he was duly warned that it did not apply to other crimes than those expressly mentioned.

5. Since the time of his conviction, he has frequently petitioned the Governor for pardon on the faith of the proclamation, and some persons have constantly interested themselves on his behalf, especially those whose duty it was to prepare the case for the Crown against his accomplices. His petitions had not, however,