

during the seven years been entertained, chiefly, I believe, owing to the horror which had been caused to the public by the disclosure of the series of crimes in which he had been concerned.

6. Upon Sullivan's addressing a fresh petition to myself, I made myself acquainted with the facts, and referred the petition to the Executive Council, who recommended his pardon, which I granted, with an entire approval of their advice. I may mention the chief grounds for that opinion. All those who received or listened to Sullivan's confessions, were impressed with the belief that they were full and unreserved. They were confirmed in every particular, as far as could be ascertained. They resulted in the destruction of a most dangerous gang, and in the suppression of similar crimes. It did not appear that Sullivan actually killed any one, for his companions distrusted his resolution, and employed him to keep watch while they seized and despatched their victims. There was reason to believe that they had used their knowledge of his previous history, he having been a convict in Tasmania, to entrap him into joining their gang, and that he was an unintentional accomplice in the first murder that subsequently took place, being, possibly, thereafter retained by fear of discovery. Finally, there was much reason to fear that future promises of pardon would fail to induce confessions, if the spirit of the promise made to this man were permanently disregarded.

7. The pardon being granted, it became known to the Government that Sullivan, if discharged in the Colony, would be exposed to great danger from the friends of the criminals whom he had betrayed; he entreated protection and assistance in leaving the Colony; and he continued for several months to reside in Dunedin Gaol, voluntarily performing hard labour, as formerly, with a view to disarm suspicion. He was, of course, free to proceed to any other country, and desired to go to South America; but it was found impossible to procure for him a conveyance direct thither, and at last it was decided to send him by way of San Francisco. That attempt has been frustrated: but I beg to assure your Lordship that there has been no condition attached to his pardon, of his proceeding to any particular country; that the Government interfere with his movements solely from a needful regard to his personal safety; and I may further state, that I am informed that the man is a skilful tradesman, who, wherever he may go, is likely to seek and follow gladly industrial occupation for his own maintenance.

8. It is not surprising that in the account of this man's crimes, given by irresponsible persons, great exaggerations should be made, and he may be represented in America, as he has been here, as having been, in fact, the worst of the gang. His accomplices, whom his evidence contributed largely to bring to justice, not unnaturally endeavoured to produce that effect, but, as I believe, without truth.

I have, &c.,

JAMES FERGUSON,

The Right Hon. the Earl of Kimberley.

Governor.

No. 27.

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

(No. 12.)

Government House, Wellington,

MY LORD,—

New Zealand, 2nd March, 1874.

In reply to your Despatch No. 85, of the 12th December, 1873, with respect to the presence of Her Majesty's ships on the coast of New Zealand, which I have communicated to my Ministers, I have the honor to inform you that they would have me readily acknowledge on their part that no express rule has been laid down on the part of Her Majesty's Government as to the stationing of a fixed number of vessels of war on the coast of New Zealand, but they submit that the tenor of the correspondence is such as to imply that the removal of Her Majesty's troops would not be followed by that of Her Majesty's ships.

2. The Native Minister especially represents that the occasional appearance of a man-of-war on the shores of districts sparsely inhabited by Europeans, had a most salutary result during past years; and even now, the arrival of a cruiser at