

possession in some surreptitious manner, which I declined afterwards to explain."

It is with great regret that I feel myself again constrained to address your Lordship on this subject; but as the paragraph just quoted—purporting to have been written by your Lordship—contains fresh charges against me, wholly without foundation, I cannot doubt your Lordship's willingness to listen to my vindication, and to repair the injury which your Lordship, I feel assured, has unintentionally done me. Your Lordship, it would seem, has stated that I obtained the document alluded to in "some surreptitious manner, which I declined afterwards to explain."

In reply permit me most distinctly to assure your Lordship that I did not obtain that document in a surreptitious manner, neither was I at any time asked by His Excellency how it came into my possession.

An assertion only has been made against me, I can only meet it by an assertion in return; but may add, that the circumstances of the transaction out of which this correspondence arises, bear out the accuracy of my statement. Permit me here to recapitulate them:—When occupying a seat in the Legislative Council, in 1847, hearing that His Excellency had written a letter to His Lordship the Bishop, requesting him to exert his influence with the Missionary Land claimants, in order to induce them to give up their lands,—and deeming this, as I did, a very improper means of attaining such an end, and as the result was calculated to affect deeply the interest of all the other land claimants, I made a motion in Council to have a copy of the letter laid upon the table. His Excellency thought proper to deny that he had written such a letter, and my motion fell to the ground. Shortly afterwards a gentleman furnished me with a copy of the said letter which I published in the *Southern Cross* newspaper, to the surprise of all who had been witness to His Excellency's denial of its existence. His Excellency afterwards thought proper to represent to your Lordship that the letter had been published in order to throw odium upon him and his Government, and that, (apparently from improper motives,) an important passage had been left out. I have satisfied your Lordship that this charge was without foundation; as the copy so published was, *verbatim*, the same as the original letter. His Excellency, in forwarding to your Lordship the complaint which I made of his conduct on this occasion, would appear to have again misled your Lordship by a new and bolder assertion,—that I got a copy of his letter referred to in a surreptitious manner. This assertion I have already denied; and the statement is the more credible when it is considered that there was no room for employing any such means; inasmuch as the document was, in its nature, a public one; and, though addressed to His Lordship the Bishop, was obviously intended for the Missionary Land Claimants generally, and was so communicated to them, without the slightest secrecy or reserve whatever. Indeed had any secrecy been enjoined, His Lordship's well known character for candour and openness of purpose, is a sufficient proof that he would have declined to undertake any service requiring the use of such unworthy means. It was not until His Excellency had denied the existence of the document, that it became necessary for him to invest it with the character of secrecy.

But His Excellency further states that I declined to explain how the document came into my possession. This is likewise untrue. Were it otherwise, however, even then His Excellency would have been wholly unjustifiable in asserting that I had obtained that document by surreptitious means. As to the fact of publishing it without permission of the writer or the person to whom it was addressed, I would merely remark that the public nature of it appeared to me to justify the course I adopted; nor was it to have been anticipated that the public business was carried on by means which the Government would desire to keep concealed.

On receipt of the letter from His Excellency, containing these dishonourable and unfounded charges, the correspondence—which I annex—ensued; and to which I respectfully solicit your Lordship's attention. It will therefore appear that I made every effort to ascertain whether the imputations so complained of had proceeded, spontaneously, from your Lordship; or whether, as I supposed, they had been first suggested by His Excellency. But since this information had been studiously withheld, I have only the alternative left me of making this appeal to your Lordship for reparation. I do so with every confidence that it will not be disregarded; as it would not be doing justice to your Lordship as a man, far less to you as the responsible adviser, and the exalted officer of Her Majesty, to suppose that you would prefer such charges against even the humblest of Her subjects, unless founded in truth; or that, having erroneously made them, you