

Governor Hobson seems to have been struck with it from the first. One of his earliest statements was, that "he knew perfectly well the chiefs would resist the execution of all awards that might be unfavourable to them in questions of land; and that it would require a strong Executive, supported by military force, to carry the decisions of the Government into effect." The chiefs believed that they still held the power of settling their internal differences in the old way. The Protector of Aborigines in July, 1842, alluded to the "general notion prevalent among the chiefs who had signed the Treaty, that in ceding the sovereignty they had reserved to themselves the right of adjudicating according to Native custom in matters purely native." Six months afterwards he again warned the Government that "the Native love of independence had been strikingly manifested on several occasions, where friend and foe had alike deprecated the interference of Government in their quarrels, expressing their determination to seek satisfaction in their own way;" and he added, "never was there a people more uneasy under the yoke of submission to authority, and they only want a bold and enterprising leader to throw off even the name of subject." In a quarrel that took place about this time at Mongonui, the Chief Protector reported that he "told the chiefs very plainly that if they did not settle their matters quickly it would be the duty of Her Majesty's Government to do it for them, and that it was impossible to allow them to make war: but Nopera was inflexible, and continued to treat every intimation of the displeasure of Her Majesty's Government at his conduct with insult." In a broil that occurred at Hokianga early in 1843, when the Protector was advocating the establishment of some kind of Government, "some of the young men were very vociferous, asserting their independence of and contempt for the Government, and many of the old men more than intimated that they proposed settling their quarrels in their old way." Commissioner Godfrey about the same time (February 1843), in reporting on a case in which he had interfered, alluded to a resolution which had been come to "that the chiefs would exercise all their ancient rights and authority of every description as theretofore, and would not in future allow of any claim to interference on the part of the Government."

The right then claimed by the chiefs seems to have been admitted by the Chief Protector. In recommending the establishment of some tribunal to settle disputed land questions among the Natives themselves, Mr. Clarke said: "The Native chiefs claim as a right the adjustment of their own quarrels, such as are purely native, without any reference to the Government: a pretension which appears to me to be borne out by the Treaty." And when Mr. Shortland asked him how, in the event of such a tribunal being constituted and the Natives refusing to abide by its decisions, he would advise the enforcement of respect and obedience, the Chief Protector proposed "that the Executive power be vested entirely in the chiefs, because their decision in most cases would be tantamount to the enforcement of the sentence."

In 1844, alluding to threatened disturbances in the North, Mr. Clarke referred to circumstances which, "followed by a series of injuries on the property of British settlers, fully evinced a spirit impatient of the control and authority of Her Majesty's Government," and which had "led the Natives to the perpetration of acts the objects of which were clearly to bring the British Government into contempt, with the ultimate view of throwing off its authority." Indeed, he said, "opinions are professed to be entertained by them that the obligations they had contracted under the Treaty of Waitangi ceased on the death of the late Governor Hobson."

All this was happening in the North (where it is so often assumed there was always a ready obedience to the Queen's authority,) at the same time that the disturbances at Porirua and the Hutt, and the Wairau Massacre, together with the armed occupation of the settlers' farms at Taranaki, were in other parts of the Colony showing clearly the spread of the feeling among the chiefs that they were entitled to take the law into their own hands. On the occasion of a descent made by a Taupo war-party upon Wanganui, Mr. Justice Chapman spoke of "innumerable thefts having taken place, on one or two occasions of a serious character; that the Natives were also very indecent in their demeanour towards the European women, both as regarded language and actions;" but when the settlers of Wanganui pressed him to interfere, all he could do was to "impress upon them that forbearance was their proper course, and that they should keep their property within doors and observe due vigilance."

Then came the Bay of Islands insurrection, where also European women were subjected to insult even before Heke finally cut down the flagstaff in token of his repudiation of the Queen's authority. It is curious to observe that very shortly after the destruction of Kororareka, the Chief Protector should have found it necessary to "admit that the Natives had not a correct and comprehensive idea of all that was implied in ceding the sovereignty of their land; and that there was a consequent discrepancy between their intention in the act and our view and interpretation of it;" adding, "hence the frequent meetings at which sovereign act and rights have been discussed and claimed, such as making war and peace among themselves without reference to the Government."

The administration of Governor FitzRoy was powerless, as those of Governor Hobson and Mr. Shortland had been before, to check the growing evil. Governor Grey saw the position of affairs at once, and warned the Imperial Government of it. In one of his earliest despatches he says—"The Natives for a long period of time had driven the [European] inhabitants from land they had fairly purchased, and often robbed them; had insulted the authorities if they remonstrated with them, and after having been warned that they would be expelled from their land by force, had remained on the land, making deliberate preparations to resist that force when brought against them. These circumstances were likely to have made all the restless and warlike spirits little disposed to submit themselves to the control of our laws and authority. Other disturbing causes have at the same time been in operation. The younger men and the slaves have almost wholly emancipated themselves from the authority of the older chiefs; while, the Government having set up no authority in the place of that which has been destroyed, a number of reckless young chiefs have sprung up, who, together with their