

"The abandonment by the Home Government of all control over Native policy" was not, as stated by His Grace, "conditional on being totally relieved from any responsibility in respect of the "military defence of the settlers;" indeed, the very contrary is the fact. Nor was that abandonment, as is suggested, a favour conferred on the Colony at its own request, but a burden imposed upon it in spite of earnest remonstrances. When, in 1862, the Imperial Government proposed to abdicate responsibility, the New Zealand Legislature, on the earliest opportunity, deliberately declared their unwillingness to relieve the Empire, and the Ministry who had agreed to the transfer resigned upon the vote then taken. Elaborately prepared Addresses to Her Majesty from both Houses were then passed, setting forth the objections to such a transfer. In the face, however, of these careful protests, the responsibility was thrust upon the Colony, which had no choice but to take it up. But in doing so both Houses of the Legislature used the following emphatic words: "The House * * * * * recognises the thoroughly efficient aid which Her Majesty's Imperial Government is now affording "for the * * * * * establishment of law and order * * * * * and relying on the "cordial co-operation of the Imperial Government for the future, cheerfully accepts the responsibility, "&c." Afterwards, in 1864, the experience of the ill effects of divided authority during a war not then ended, led the New Zealand Legislature to propose, as a means of restoring unity to the counsels of the Colony, the withdrawal of the troops, which had already been indicated by the Imperial Government. But even then, at a time when one overpowering evil cried loudly for a remedy, the Legislature held to the opinion that the Empire had yet duties and interests in New Zealand. They looked on time as an element in the question of removal, and, not hastily, but by deliberate amendments on more sweeping proposals of the Government of Mr. Weld, qualified the request for the removal of the troops by the expression "at the earliest possible period consistent with the maintenance of Imperial interests and the safety of the Colony." Thus His Grace's statement teems with inaccuracies and anachronisms. The advent of the great army, and the Waikato campaign, were long subsequent to the first, and contemporaneous with the second professed abdication of control over Native affairs. The confiscation policy of 1863 was allowed before the commencement of the withdrawal of the army. The law under which the confiscations took place was left to its operation, not on condition of total relief from responsibility, but upon the amendment of some of its clauses; and the Despatch of Lord Carnarvon, of the 1st December, 1866, offering a regiment without subsidy, was written between two and three years after the allowance of the confiscation policy, and when every act of confiscation had been effected.

The Imperial Government themselves appear, for a long time after declining authority in the matter, to have had an indistinct impression that it was not possible—or not honourable—thus to divest themselves of their duty to the Maori race. Stipulations have been from time to time made that sums should be expended by the Colony for "Native purposes," in consideration of Imperial military aid. Such a stipulation is the basis of Lord Carnarvon's Despatch and offer of the 1st December, 1866. This stipulation, though not formally accepted by the Colony, had been constantly complied with in practice, and the services of one Imperial regiment had been enjoyed up to the date of the defeats of the Colonial forces under Colonel McDonnell. The announcement that this last regiment was to leave came about the same time. Then the Legislature, in the distress of the Colony, which was suffering from commercial depression and overburdened finances, as well as from military disaster, resolved to accept formally the terms offered in December, 1866. They did not revoke their decision on the general question, or contemplate the active use of Imperial troops. They exerted every effort to meet their difficulties themselves; but they viewed with anxiety the removal of the Imperial standard at the particular juncture, in the midst of savage warfare, as tending "to increase the excitement and confidence of the rebel Natives, and to discourage those friendly to Her Majesty's Government," and stimulating, in fact, an internecine war of races. In the meantime, the Imperial Government seems to have ceased to recognise that it has any duty or responsibility with respect to either one race or the other. The Despatch under review revokes Lord Carnarvon's offer, strangely asserting at the same time that the Colonial Government and Legislature, in their express acceptance of the conditions dictated by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, "merely requested that a British regiment may be allowed "to remain in the Colony, without any condition whatever."

His Grace's statements and reasoning are perhaps good enough to furnish out a foregone conclusion, and their defectiveness is only referred to in defence of the character of the Colony for energy and intelligence, consistency and sincerity.

Along with the total refusal of help, in a time of great trial, the Colony would have learned with lively interest the views entertained by the Imperial Government as to the relations which should for the future exist between the Empire and its distant offshoot. The total silence of His Grace on this subject (for it can surely not be intended that the interchange of condolences and reproaches is to be the only future *nexus*), and the absence of any indication of a positive policy, deepen the peculiar impression made by the Despatch of the 13th December last.

For His Excellency the Governor.

E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 18.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G., to His Grace the Duke of BUCKINGHAM.

(No. 19.)

Government House, Wellington,

MY LORD DUKE,—

New Zealand, 9th February, 1869.

At the request of my Responsible Advisers, I have the honor to forward herewith a Ministerial Memorandum, covering a copy of a document submitted to your Grace, on the 25th November ultimo, by Mr. Fitzherbert, the Colonial Treasurer, and Agent for this Colony in England.