

responsible government, a man who has not been surpassed in eloquence and knowledge by any of his successors. It includes Bishop Hadfield, whose labours in New Zealand for more than forty years, and perfect acquaintance with all the facts bearing on the case, give to his opinion a weight to which that of few others is entitled. It includes Mr. Mantell, whose acute intellect is at least equal to that of any other public man in New Zealand, and whose long experience has made him perfectly familiar with much of which many, even in the highest employments, are lamentably ignorant. It includes Mr. Swainson, the first and ablest Attorney-General of the colony, and others with whose names I will not now trouble Lord Derby, but which are held in honour in New Zealand. It would indisputably have included the late Bishop Selwyn and Sir William Martin, were they still living, and I know that it also includes men whose practical experience entitles their judgment to respect, but whose position as public servants precludes its open expression. I know also that the majority is mainly composed of settlers absolutely unacquainted with the history of the colony which they have made their home, and that a large proportion of those who, whether in the Press or the Legislature, guide the opinion of others are not much better cognizant of past transactions than those whom they profess to instruct. But as to the honest conviction of that majority that the Government has acted rightly, and that the Native subjects of Her Majesty in New Zealand have, in their opinion, no reason to complain, I entertain not the smallest doubt.

## (III.)

11. As regards my statement that it was from the letters of Mr. Murray and articles in the public Press alone that I obtained information as to the proceedings on the west coast of the North Island, after my departure from New Zealand, I may observe that the fact remains unquestioned, and I might, therefore, well rest content with taking note of that admission.

12. But I cannot refrain from pointing out the divergence between the view of this matter taken by the Ministers and Sir James Prendergast. The Ministers now say that it would have been "wrong" for them to communicate with me while out of the colony. They must, I think, have arrived at this view on subsequent reflection; for when I left Wellington for Fiji, in 1881, the promise was made that during my absence I should be supplied with the fullest information of all that went on in New Zealand. Practically, in the whole course of my long and varied experience, I have never known any other instance in which the closest communication has not been kept up between an absent Governor and the Ministers of the colony which he had temporarily left, but to which he was about to return. It is, I think, only consistent with common sense and with courtesy that this should be so. Still, I have no doubt that, as the Acting Governor has indisputably all the powers of a permanent one, the Ministers are strictly and technically right in considering that they are under no positive obligations to make such communications. I never said they were so. I have stated what is a fact, and from that fact different people will probably draw different inferences.

13. Sir James Prendergast, on the contrary, admits that he thinks that communications should take place with an absent Governor, and (notwithstanding their own assertion that they would have considered it "wrong" to communicate with me) he labours to prove that Mr. Murray's letters must be virtually regarded as those of Ministers, and adds that, moreover, he wrote to me himself.

14. I entertain an almost insuperable unwillingness to associate the name of any member of the judicial bench with discussions from which he should be wholly free. As, however, Sir James Prendergast himself invites attention to the circumstance, I must say that I did no doubt receive, when in Fiji, a very short private letter from Sir James Prendergast, but that it certainly conveyed to me no information of importance, and that if he anticipated that my movements would be influenced by it, I am not surprised that he should have failed to expect my early return to New Zealand, for in the few lines which that letter contained I was told that Sir James had been assured by Ministers that there was no danger of any disturbance of the peace in the North Island. Had I received that letter alone, and unaccompanied by Mr. Murray's warning that, in his opinion, the Ministers were about to take advantage of my absence to precipitate a crisis in Native affairs on the west coast of the North Island, I might not improbably have continued my voyage to the Solomon Islands, as originally intended.

## (IV.)

15. I approach, with great regret, the last topic dwelt on in the memoranda: the circumstances attending my return to New Zealand from Fiji in October, 1881.

When I had satisfied myself that what had been done in my absence could not be undone, that in issuing the Proclamation on the 19th October my Advisers had acted within their technical rights, and that they were supported by a large majority in Parliament and in the country, it appeared to me that any discussion as to the greater or less degree of courtesy or candour shown by them would be as undignified as it would be objectless. Whatever my personal wishes, I could not at once retire from the Government of the colony. To have done so would have created false hopes on the part of the Maoris, and encouraged them in resistance, which could only be injurious to them; while my retirement under such circumstances could not but have caused some embarrassment both to Her Majesty's Government and to my successor.

16. For such period as I might feel compelled to retain office it was desirable that I should maintain friendly relations with Ministers who possessed the confidence of Parliament, and with whose advice it was my obvious duty to comply; and it appeared to me that silence with regard to past transactions was almost essential to this result. In my confidential communications with the Secretary of State it was my duty to report the facts. I did so in the most temperate language, without any expression of reproach or complaint, nor did I desire subsequently to depart from the reticence which I had prescribed to myself.

17. But it is now impossible for me, without apparent acquiescence in statements in which I do not concur, to escape from putting on record my own convictions.