

The second occasion to which I allude, arose thus: after Mr. Buller's failure in appealing to Lord Grey's sense of right, some mutual friends of his lordship's and mine imagined that if he and I could be brought together to converse upon the subject, his obstinacy might perhaps be overcome by my earnestness. Knowing him well, I was not of that opinion myself; but I reluctantly gave my consent to an arrangement, whereby an interview was to take place between Lord Grey and myself at Mr. Buller's house, and in his presence. We met accordingly. I was extremely unwell at the time, so much so, as to be scarcely able to stand. I managed nevertheless to lay before Lord Grey in the most respectful and conciliatory terms, my own view of what appeared to me to be the claims of the Company upon him, not merely with respect to their pecuniary losses, but also with respect to the disappointments and sufferings of the colonists in New Zealand, in consequence of their being continually subject to arbitrary Government, and deprived of all voice in the management of their own public affairs. Lord Grey when in opposition had been as strenuous in demanding free institutions for New Zealand as in demanding pecuniary redress for the Company. His manner in listening to me was cold and haughty, even to insult. In compliance with a promise which I had given before the interview, I patiently submitted, not only to this reception of my plea, but to a positive rejection of it, coached in rough, and almost brutal language. But I begged and prayed in vain; and the interview was concluded by Lord Grey's flinging out of the room in a pet, whilst I sunk exhausted by the effort and agitation of the meeting. A few days later I was struck with apoplexy; and from that time until late in the autumn of the following year, was entirely disabled from attending to any kind of business.

My incapacity changed the whole character of the direction of the New Zealand Company's affairs, which then fell into the hands of a few persons in whose minds sound principles of colonization and colonial government were as nothing compared with pounds, shillings, and pence.

They and Lord Grey soon came to an understanding. He wanted to get rid of the obligation imposed upon him by his previous career as a Colonial Reformer, and an advocate of the redress by the Imperial Government of the wrongs which the Imperial Government had done to the Company. They wanted to save the shareholders, including themselves, from further calls: to raise the value of New Zealand Company's shares in the Market: and to go on with a pottering make-believe of colonization, with funds supplied by the Government, as a means of avoiding the disgrace which would have attended upon an avowed abandonment of all the objects for which the Company was formed.

They made a bargain. The directors sold the honor of the Company and the interests of the Colony for money, to come through a parliamentary obligation upon New Zealand to recompense the Company for its losses; and with this purchase money Lord Grey bought exemption from the obligations of rectitude and honor.

That was the second stage in the building up of what is now called the Company's debt.

The third and last stage took place when the bill which has become the Constitution Act, was before Parliament. Sir John Pakington inherited the bargain into which his predecessor had entered, and felt bound in honor to carry it out. Consequently, when he proposed for the first time in the modern history of British colonisation, to hand over to the colonists in their General Assembly the entire disposal of the waste lands of the Crown, he also proposed to charge these lands with a per centage upon the proceeds of the sales of them, for the purpose of paying to the Company the sum of 268,000*l.*, with interest. Friends of New Zealand then in London most earnestly protested against this arrangement, and we had an interview with Sir John Pakington on the subject. He admitted that there was much force in our objections, but said that he was bound to carry out by some means or other the engagement to which his predecessor, Lord Grey, had pledged the honor of Her Majesty, in whom alone the British Constitution vested the lands of the Crown in the Colonies. We still protested. I think we had more than one interview: at any rate the subject was mentioned at different interviews. Though long severed from the wreck of the directors, and totally at variance with them, I wrote to them imploring that they would not persevere in asking that the colony should be saddled with so unjust and mischievous a burden, as to pay to the Company one-fourth of all the proceeds of land sales. They turned a deaf ear to me, relying on Lord Grey's bond and Sir John Pakington's honor. At last, however, Sir John Pakington was so much staggered by our repeated protests, that he made us a sort of offer. He said that he and his colleagues, having considered the matter, were disposed to give time for enquiry into the subject. We answered that that was all we wanted at the time. But then