

These misconceptions, however, are so evident in the Despatch before me that I feel obliged to notice one or two passages in it.

You state your opinion that the decision taken by the Secretary of State for War is likely to entail serious disaster on the Colony and a large expenditure on Great Britain.

I am most earnestly anxious to disabuse you of any expectation which may remain in your mind that the Imperial Government will allow itself to incur large expenditure, or any expenditure beyond that which may be involved in the maintenance of a single Regiment of Infantry, in protection of the Colonists of New Zealand against the Native inhabitants of the Islands. By the act of my predecessor in this office, the management of Native affairs was transferred to the Local Government, and the duty of self-protection was devolved upon the Colonists of New Zealand. That duty they have deliberately adopted. The Colonial Government have been allowed to exercise that control by way of extensive confiscation and otherwise in a manner to which the Home Government, as Mr. Cardwell has stated, if responsible for the consequence of their actions, would not have given their sanction. They are not inclined to repudiate the pledges on the faith of which this freedom of action has been accorded to them or to evade its legitimate consequences. On the contrary, complaints have actually been made that Her Majesty's Government were keeping troops in the Colony against the wishes of the Local Government. In this state of things I must request you most clearly to understand that the troops (with the possible exception which I have noticed) will be withdrawn and will not be restored. The Colonists will be expected to do that which they can do, which they have promised to do, and which I am bound to add they show no disinclination to do—namely, to provide for their own defence. I earnestly trust that there is no party in the Colony which looks to the support of British Arms in any future Native war, or at least that no such expectation will be allowed to influence the policy of yourself or your Advisers. If any Colonial Government were to involve itself in such a war, in reliance on military assistance from this country, they might plunge the Colony, for a time at least, into disasters which it is needless for me to contemplate.

In another part of your Despatch you observe that the sudden removal of so large a body of troops from a country circumstanced like New Zealand, is a very critical operation. This is perfectly true. But I must add it is an operation which has not been imposed upon you. It was in February, 1865, that General Cameron was instructed to send home from New Zealand five of the regiments then in the Colony. We are now at the end of December, 1866, and I am not yet apprised that the British Force in the Islands is reduced to a single regiment, such a withdrawal therefore can hardly be termed sudden.

Finally, I must observe that while you thus appear to cling to the expectation of continued assistance from this country, your own reports, or rather the absence of reports from you, show how little you recognize any continued responsibility to the Imperial Government for the conduct of the War. While in your Despatch of the 15th October, you inform me that a Trooper of the Colonial Forces had been killed by some hostile Natives, you leave me to learn from the newspapers that in the neighbourhood of Hawke's Bay, a body of Natives who refused to give up their arms had been attacked by the Colonial Forces in their Pa (which is said to have been unfortified), and driven into the bush, twenty-three of them being killed and a like number wounded, and that a Native village on the West Coast, after being summoned to surrender was attacked by a Colonial Force, and, escape being cut off, about thirty or forty persons were killed.

In the account before me this last transaction is described as "the most brilliant affair of this Guerilla War." Meantime your own Despatches would hardly lead me to suppose that any recognized warfare was in progress. I need hardly observe that if it at any time were alleged in this country that these affairs, described by the Colonial Press as brilliant successes, were in fact unwarranted and merciless attacks on unoffending persons, I have no authentic means of reply afforded me by your Despatches.

I have, &c.,

Governor Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

CARNARVON.