

Ministers fail to perceive, if they understand the expression aright, in what respect the Native policy is open to objection on that account. In 1858, an elaborate series of Acts was passed by the Colonial Legislature, in order to give legitimate effect to that authority in Native districts, and one of the most important of them, "The Native Territorial Rights Act, 1858," was disallowed because (see Despatch, 18th May, 1859, signed by Lord Carnarvon in absence of Sir E. B. Lytton,) Her Majesty's Government could not "either for the sake of the Colonists or for that of the Natives, or for Imperial interests, surrender the control over Native affairs."

In 1862, Governor Sir George Grey strenuously tried to introduce local institutions into Native districts, and the General Assembly appropriated for three years the annual sum of fifty thousand pounds (exclusive of appropriations for Native schools), such sum to be expended for purposes of Native government in such manner as the Governor may direct; and this appropriation was made at the time that the Legislature refused to assume responsibility for Native affairs, and was therefore subject to the Governor's personal control.

Every successive Administration since the conduct of Native affairs was transferred to the Colony, has been anxious to avail itself of every opportunity to induce the Natives in the disturbed districts to resume their friendly relations towards the European race, and thus open the way to their participation in local institutions. Nor has the Legislature neglected to provide for the special interests of the Natives generally. The Native Lands Acts have enabled them to dispose of their lands. "The Native Rights Act, 1865," has given them all the rights of natural-born subjects of Her Majesty. "The Maori Real Estate Management Act, 1867," provided for the management of real estate belonging to infants and others of the Maori race under disability. "The Native Schools Act, 1867," made provision for the education of Natives. "The Maori Representation Act, 1867," made special provision for Native representation in the Colonial and Provincial Legislatures.

Unfortunately, in the case of the (so-called) King Natives, to whom no doubt Lord Granville principally refers, their consent to any negotiations with us has not, until very lately, been obtained.

If, however, the recognition of Maori authority is intended to mean a recognition independent of, or inconsistent with, the authority of Her Majesty, Ministers at once state that such a recognition was never entertained, and could not, even if it were desirable, have been granted by the Colonial Government.

It must also be borne in mind that any recognition of the Maori King, as having authority over the many influential tribes who are quite independent of him, would at once be resented by them, and could not be effected except by force.

Lord Granville further states that large concessions (the abandonment of land and the recognition of Maori authority) "are unavoidable, to appease a pervading discontent with which the Colony is otherwise unable to cope."

Ministers cannot imagine on what grounds His Lordship thinks it right to advise such concessions to rebels in arms. Concessions of that kind to armed rebels in civilized countries do not generally tend to conciliation, and would certainly not have that effect where the rebels are semi-barbarous, have an overweening idea of their superior prowess, and see the Colony abandoned by the Imperial Government. Conciliation of Te Kooti simply is submission to massacre. It is the duty and the earnest wish of the Colonial Government to remove every real grievance of the Native race; but any attempt to buy off those who are fighting against us, by concession of land and recognition of authority, would always be dangerous, and would now be doubly dangerous, when those persons learn, on the authority of this Despatch, which was published only five days after it was written, that the weakness of the Colony renders those concessions unavoidable, and that the British Troops are withdrawn for the express purpose of reducing the Colony to that requisite weakness.

It does not appear that the present Prime Minister, in his recent reply to the memorials for the release of the Fenian prisoners, takes the same view of concession, even where it would be impossible to misinterpret it as a sign of weakness, or as an encouragement to rebellion. He says that "The first duty is to consider, not the overwhelming power with which future crime could be repressed, and still less the satisfaction always attendant on concession to demands that have sprung from a generous compassion, but the paramount obligation of securing in their peaceful occupation the loyal mass of the community." And he adds, "To raise or to incite insurrection against the Government of this country, and against its public order, is ever to be regarded as a great crime; to permit it, would be one not less great. The Administration can have no interest except the interest of duty in its punishment."

The late Duke of Newcastle, when Secretary of State for the Colonies, also reprobated this abject policy of weakness, now sought to be imposed on the Colony. His Grace, in a Despatch dated 5th June, 1861, written since the commencement of this war to Governor Sir George Grey, stated as follows, in reference to conditions of peace: "But I wish to impress upon you my conviction, that in deciding upon those conditions it will be your duty, while avoiding all unnecessary severity towards men who can scarcely be looked upon as subjects in rebellion, to take care that neither your own mission nor the cessation of hostilities when it arrives, shall carry with it, in the eyes of the Natives, any appearance of weakness or alarm. It would be better even to prolong the war, with all its evils, than to end it without producing in the Native mind such a conviction of our strength, as may render peace not temporary and precarious, but well-grounded and lasting."

The last point to which Ministers will allude is the premature publication of the Despatch under consideration. It was written on the 7th of October last; it was presented, not to Parliament, but to the London newspapers, and it appeared in the *Times* of the 12th of that month; and, although the mail to Australia had left, its substance was telegraphed *via* Galle, and was known throughout New Zealand ten days before the Despatch itself reached the Governor. This course, in the case of Despatches to the Governor of a Colony, is, it is believed, most unusual, and, in this case, calculated to have a very mischievous effect on the Native mind, and on the negotiations which were at the time in progress with the King Natives, with apparently every reasonable prospect of a favourable issue.