

education of public opinion by the published reports in England from the missionaries, and the schemes of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, were all factors combining to stimulate the British Government to a recognition of its responsibilities.

31. In 1836 a select committee of the House of Commons had inquired into the different modes in which land had been disposed of in the Australian colonies and the Cape of Good Hope, and Wakefield's evidence as to the evils of profuse grants of land in Australia had been illuminating. "New Zealand," he said, "is coming under the dominion of the British Crown." He then went on to refer to the adventurers from New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, *who had for a few trinkets and a little gun powder obtained land*; and concluded: "*We are, I think, going to colonize New Zealand, though we are doing so in a most slovenly and scrambling and disgraceful manner.*"

32. But the stages in the establishment of British sovereignty were being rapidly expedited. On the 5th October, 1837, Sir George Gipps was appointed Governor of New South Wales. On 15th June the territorial limits of New South Wales were enlarged to include New Zealand, and on the 30th July, 1839, William Hobson was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of New Zealand, with the proviso that he was to obey the lawful instructions of the Governor of New South Wales.

33. On leaving England for New Zealand Hobson received instructions from the Marquis of Normandy. The following passage is extracted from the despatch of the 14th August, 1839:—

There is, probably, no part of the earth in which colonization could be effected with a greater or surer prospect of national advantage.

On the other hand, the Ministers of the Crown have been restrained by still higher motives from engaging in such an enterprise. They have deferred to the advice of the Committee appointed by the House of Commons in the year 1836, to inquire into the state of the Aborigines residing in the vicinity of the Colonial Settlements; and have concurred with that Committee in thinking that the increase of national wealth and power, promised by the acquisition of New Zealand, would be a most inadequate compensation for the injury which must be inflicted on this kingdom itself, by embarking in a measure *essentially unjust, and but too certainly fraught with calamity to a numerous and inoffensive people, whose title to the soil and to the sovereignty of New Zealand is indisputable, and has been solemnly recognized by the British Government.* We retain these opinions in unimpaired force; and though circumstances entirely beyond our control have at length compelled us to alter our course, I do not scruple to avow that we depart from it with extreme reluctance.

The necessity for the interposition of the Government has, however, become too evident to admit of any further inaction. The reports which have reached this office within the last few months establish the facts, that about the commencement of the year 1838 a body of not less than two thousand British subjects had become permanent inhabitants of New Zealand; that amongst them were many persons of bad or doubtful character—convicts who had fled from our penal settlements, or seamen who had deserted their ships; and that these people, unrestrained by any law, and amenable to no tribunals, were alternately the authors and the victims of every species of crime and outrage. It further appears that extensive cessions of land have been obtained from the Natives, and that several hundred persons have recently sailed from this country to occupy and cultivate those lands. The spirit of adventure having thus been effectually roused, it can no longer be doubted that an extensive settlement of British subjects will be rapidly established in New Zealand; and that, unless protected and restrained by necessary laws and institutions, they will repeat, unchecked, in that quarter of the globe, the same process of war and spoliation under which uncivilized tribes have almost invariably disappeared as often as they have been brought into the immediate vicinity of emigrants from the nations of Christendom. To mitigate and, if possible, to avert these disasters, and to rescue the emigrants themselves from the evils of a lawless state of society, it has been resolved to adopt the most effective measures for establishing amongst them a settled form of civil government. To accomplish this design is the principal object of your mission.

*I have already stated that we acknowledge New Zealand as a sovereign and independent State, so far at least as it is possible to make that acknowledgment in favour of a people composed of numerous, dispersed, and petty tribes, who possess few political relations to each other, and are incompetent to act, or even to deliberate, in concert. But the admission of their rights, though inevitably qualified by this consideration, is binding on the faith of the British Crown. The Queen, in common with Her Majesty's immediate predecessor, disclaims, for herself and for her subjects, every pretension to seize on the Islands of New Zealand, or to govern them as a part of the dominion of Great Britain, unless the free and intelligent consent of the Natives, expressed according to their established usages shall be first obtained.*