

but they were stationed at several important outposts, critical positions, which were in the heart of rebel Native districts, and the sudden abandonment of which would inevitably have led to renewed insurrection. How utterly insignificant would the delay of a few months be considered if their premature removal had caused the destruction of a settlement, the massacre of families, and the commencement of ferocious warfare! It would be insulting to the British nation to imagine for one moment that such a catastrophe would be regarded by it with apathy because it had resulted from a strict compliance with orders from England, or that it would not hold a Governor morally responsible for the result because he pleaded a literal obedience to such orders. In the Cape of Good Hope, where active hostilities were not nearly so general or of so recent a date as in New Zealand, and where for the most part the defence of a frontier line alone is requisite, the Imperial Government is itself far more cautious in the removal of only four regiments, and requires greater delay to be observed than Sir George Grey is blamed for in the removal of nine regiments from New Zealand.

Mr. Adderley (Under Secretary for the Colonies) is reported to have said in the House of Commons on the 4th June, 1867:—

“Ample warning had been given that the number [of troops] would not be maintained, both in the treatment of other Colonies and in the treatment of the Cape. The Earl of Carnarvon, notwithstanding, considered that there should be ample warning of a change of policy, and therefore he proposed that reductions should be made year by year. During the present year no reduction was to be made; in 1868 one of the four regiments was either to be paid for at the same rate as other Colonies were paying, or to be withdrawn; in 1869 two regiments were to be paid for or withdrawn; and he believed it was not until 1872 that all the troops were to be paid for or withdrawn, with the exception of one regiment, which, on the ground of Imperial policy, would continue to be maintained at the cost of the English taxpayer.”

Ministers believe that when the bitterness of personal controversy has subsided, and all the foregoing circumstances are taken into careful and unimpassioned consideration, justice will be done to Sir George Grey in his attempt under extraordinary difficulties to give effect to the wishes of the Imperial Government consistently with his personal responsibility for the safety of the Colony, and that it will be recognized that he acted on the side of a wise caution, preferring rather to expose himself to the temporary displeasure of the Imperial Government than to sacrifice Her Majesty's subjects by a blind adherence to the letter rather than to the spirit of instructions given at a great distance and in the absence of local knowledge.

E. W. STAFFORD.

To His Excellency the Governor.

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No. 17.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B., to His Grace the Duke of BUCKINGHAM.

(No. 131.) Government House, Wellington,  
MY LORD DUKE,— 23rd November, 1867.

I have read, with very great concern, a debate which took place in the House of Lords on the 15th of July last, and beg to state some remarks which suggest themselves to my mind in reference to the Earl of Carnarvon's speech upon that occasion, and in reference to some of the events to which he alluded.

2. His Lordship stated that he had before him repeated communications describing the affairs of New Zealand, on which he justified his proceedings in reference to the Governor of this country—the letter he particularly quoted being one from Deputy-Commissary-General Strickland to the Secretary of the Treasury, dated the 8th November, 1866, of which his Lordship knew no copy had been communicated to the Governor.

3. I think Lord Carnarvon acted against justice in receiving, in breach of the Queen's regulations, a letter from a subordinate officer in this country; in then degrading the Governor from his position in part on the authority of that letter; in reading a great part of it in his place in the House of Lords; and in, at the same time, not stating to their Lordships that it was a letter sent and received in breach of the Queen's regulations; that the Governor and his Ministers were ignorant of its existence; that their reply to it had never been received; and that the fact of the letter being sent in breach of the regulations, tainted it with suspicion; and that it was wrong to the Governor and his Ministers, under such circumstances, to have directed the publication, in England, of a letter calculated so seriously to injure them and the Colony.

4. All this makes a greater impression on my mind, because Lord Carnarvon was the Governor's superior officer, under whom he had been serving; and by his position his Lordship was bound at least to state with judicial fairness the case of a distant and high public servant of the Crown, whose conduct he was bringing under unfavorable review.