

and other unscrupulous characters, who introduced a taste for ardent spirits, various diseases, and much demoralisation. These persons also swindled, or attempted to swindle, the natives out of large tracts of land, by getting them to subscribe contracts, of the real import of which they certainly knew little or nothing, by which entire districts were conveyed away for the merest trifle. Under these circumstances, it became necessary to establish a government sufficiently strong to protect the aborigines and the real interests of the colonists. Accordingly in Jan. 1840, New Zealand was constituted a colony, and a governor appointed, who immediately proclaimed, among other announcements, that all purchases of land would, in future, be void unless conducted through the British local government. But shortly before the formal occupation of these islands, the mania for speculating in land attained to an enormous extent; and vast tracts, equal, in fact, to provinces, were acquired by a few individuals, belonging to the islands, to Sydney, and other parts. It was not, therefore, enough to prevent such wholesale acquisitions in future. Justice to the natives, on the one hand, and the best interests of the colony on the other, made it imperatively necessary that the grounds on which the claims to land were made should be carefully inquired into; that in all cases in which the natives had been swindled the grants should be cancelled; and that, when confirmed, their extent should be limited. In consequence of these considerations, a commission was appointed to inquire into the validity of all claims to land; and the commissioners were instructed to recognise those only which were founded on fair and equitable considerations, with the important proviso, that no claim for land, when affirmed, should be allowed to a greater extent than 2,560 acres.

The N. Zealand Company, established in 1841, for the promotion of colonisation in the islands, acquired in this view a right to extensive tracts of land. It had not, however, been long established till disputes began to arise between its directors and the government; and great difficulties were also experienced in adjusting the rival land claims of the crown, the natives, the colonists, and others. Hence the affairs of the islands were for a considerable period in the greatest confusion. The natives and the colonists went to war, and the real or alleged grievances of the N. Zealand Company engrossed a large share of the attention of parliament. For a time, however, these differences were adjusted, and it was not until the year 1863 that, as above stated, a new struggle, fiercer than any preceding one, broke out between the natives and the European settlers.

The present form of government for New Zealand was established by statute 15 & 16 Vict., cap. 72. By that Act the colony was divided into six provinces, since increased to nine—viz. Auckland, Taranaki, Wellington, Otago, Hawkes Bay, Marlborough, Nelson, Canterbury, and Southland—each governed by a superintendent and a provincial council, consisting of not less than 9 members. These members of council are chosen by the votes of the inhabitants of the different provinces, and the qualification for members and electors is possession in the district for which the vote is given of a freehold estate of the value of 50*l.*; or a leasehold estate of the annual value of 10*l.*, held upon a lease which at the time of registration has not less than three years to run; or being a householder within the district of the clear annual value of 10*l.*, or within the limits of a town of the clear annual value of 5*l.* Aliens are disqualified. Every council continues for four

years from the day of the return of the writs, unless dissolved by the governor. The superintendent and council of each province, with certain restrictions specified in the act, have the power of making such laws as may be required for peace and order. Such laws are, however, to be sent to the governor for his assent, and may be disallowed within three months after their receipt. No laws have any force until assented to by the governor. A general assembly, consisting of the governor, a legislative council, and a house of representatives, is also established by Act 15 & 16 Vict., cap. 72. Legislative councillors may hold their seats for life. Members for the house of representatives are elected by electors possessing the same qualifications as those who can vote for provincial councillors. An elector is also qualified to be a member. The house of representatives is to consist of 53 members—see 24 Vict., cap. 12—elected by 43 electoral districts.

The total revenue of the colony for the years 1856–62, and the expenditure for 1862—former years being unreported—are shown in the subjoined statement:—

Years	Revenue	Expenditure
	£	£
1856	188,328	
1858	341,655	
1859	459,649	
1860	464,738	
1861	691,464	
1862	1,186,009	1,513,697

The control of native affairs, and the entire responsibility of dealing with questions of native government, were in 1863–64 transferred from the imperial to the colonial government.

The principal British settlements consist of Auckland, the cap., on the E. side of the N. island, on the S. side of Waitemata harbour, lat. 36° 51' 27" S., long. 174° 45' 20" E.; Wellington, the cap. of the S. prov., on the E. side of Port Nicholson, near the S. extremity of the N. island in Cook's Straits; New Plymouth, or Taranaki, on the E. coast of do.; Nelson, at the head of Tasman's Gulf, N. shore of the middle island; Akaroa, near the extremity of Banks's Peninsula, on the E. coast of do. A settlement established at Otago, on the SE. coast of the middle island, is patronised by the Scotch Free Church; and a settlement entitled New Canterbury, has been founded under the patronage of the leaders of the established church. It may be doubted whether much judgment has been displayed in the selection of the majority of these sites. At Auckland there is no good landing place even for small vessels, and the water in-shore being shoal, ships load and unload with difficulty. It is stated by Mr. Southey (Treatise on Colonial Wools, p. 145), that a ship laden with coal, of which the inhab. were at the time in want, was obliged to leave the port from there being no chance of her being able to discharge her cargo within anything like a reasonable time. The town is also indifferently supplied with fresh water, and the country is bare of wood, and comparatively unproductive. Wellington is hemmed in by ranges of mountains which in great measure shut it out from all communication with the interior, though this disadvantage has been in part overcome by the carrying of good roads through the ranges in question. It is also frequently exposed to heavy gales of wind; and the water in-shore is so shallow as to hinder vessels of above 80 or 100 tons burden from reaching its wharfs. But despite these serious drawbacks, the town is said to be