

fied. In his despatch to Sir Richard Bourke, dated April 13th, 1836, Lord Glenelg echoes the feelings of the Sydney ruler when he writes, "I believe we shall consult very ill for the real welfare of that helpless and unfortunate race, by recognizing in them any right to alienate to private adventurers the land of the colony." The great bugbear of that day was the Wakefield doctrine of centralization. Bourke was too sensible a man openly to oppose the crotchets of his superiors, but his manner of dealing with the squatting question evidently softened down the prejudices of Lord Glenelg, for his lordship writes, "if my information be correct, the southern half of that great region (the eastern side) presents a physical impediment to the close concentration of the inhabitants, with which it would be only futile to contend by human law. The age of manufacturing industry is of course remote." The mind of the minister is evidently not satisfied upon this point of settlement, when we find him inditing, "It may yet admit of serious doubt whether the settlers of Port Phillip have not in reality given birth to undertakings, which deliberate reflection would have recommended rather than discouraged."

But the Association died hard. Major Mercer was sent home to plead their cause. His first communication to Lord Glenelg is dated from Dryden House, by Edinburgh, January 26th, 1836. He thus commences: "In the capacity of shareholder and as agent for the "Geelong and Dutigalla Association," &c. His application is, of course, for a confirmation of the treaty. He declares their intention to have been "The promotion of a nucleus of a free and useful colony, founded upon principles of conciliation and civilization, of philanthropy, morality and temperance, without danger of its ever becoming onerous to the mother country, and calculated to insure the well-being and comfort of the natives." The proposition he submitted was, that a grant of land be issued in the names of John Batman and Charles Swanston, Esquires, as those gentlemen had executed regular deeds, binding themselves to act generally for the members of the Association. The Major predicts that, if obstructions were now raised by government, "the country would be, if ever, occupied hereafter by the extermination of the aboriginal inhabitants alone." Certain it is, that only in these colonies settled originally by private companies, as New Zealand and South Australia, have the interests of the natives been duly regarded and their rights more especially respected.