

No. 77.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G., to the Right Hon. the Earl of KIMBERLEY.

(No. 60.)

Government House, Auckland,

MY LORD,—

New Zealand, 27th June, 1872.

In my Despatch No. 70, of the 30th June, 1870, I reported that it had then recently come to my knowledge that about twenty-five (25) South Sea Islanders had lately arrived at Auckland, under contract to work at a flax mill in that neighbourhood, and that I had immediately called the attention of the Colonial Ministers to that fact; observing that (to omit other considerations), I knew from my own experience in Queensland that the introduction of this kind of labour would give much trouble to both the Government and the employers, and that in this temperate climate, where there are no sugar or cotton plantations, there can be no real need for it; while it might interfere with the at present almost purely British character of the population of New Zealand, and might otherwise produce, ultimately, various social inconveniences. I added, that inquiry should be made forthwith into the circumstances of the importation of the South Sea Islanders referred to, and that, if this sort of traffic should be encouraged or permitted, it would be found necessary to have special legislation on the subject here, as in Mauritius, Queensland, and elsewhere.

2. I further forwarded with the above-mentioned Despatch a Ministerial Memorandum from Mr. Fox; by which it appeared that the Government had caused inquiry to be made, and was satisfied that nothing had at that time occurred in New Zealand to justify its active interference in this matter, while it would take care that no abuse should be permitted in the future. Accordingly, the Police authorities at Auckland were directed to keep these South Sea Islanders under their observation, and to make reports on the subject as they should see occasion.

3. I am now requested by my Responsible Advisers to transmit the enclosed Ministerial Memorandum, covering the last Report of Inspector Thomson, giving full information on this case.

4. In the reply to my Despatch No. 70 of 1870, your Lordship expressed approval of the action taken so far; and I am confident that the Colonial Government and Parliament will continue to exercise due vigilance in this matter. Moreover, as I have remarked before, public opinion in this Colony seems to be decidedly opposed to any large immigration except from the United Kingdom, and (to some extent) from the Continent of Europe.

I have, &c.,

G. F. BOWEN.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Kimberley.

Enclosure in No. 77.

MEMORANDUM by Mr. GISBORNE.

Mr. GISBORNE presents his compliments to His Excellency, and begs to enclose copies of a Report made by Inspector Thomson, of the Armed Constabulary, of the result of an inquiry made by him into the history and present treatment of certain South Sea Islanders, that were brought to Auckland a little over two years ago by Mr. Brissenden.

As much interest has been felt on the subject of the treatment of South Sea Islanders imported for labour purposes, Mr. Thomson has been instructed to keep the matter under his observation, and to report in case he sees occasion.

Wellington, 7th June, 1872.

W. GISBORNE.

Sub-Enclosure in No. 77.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure in No. 77.

REPORT by Inspector THOMSON.

SIR,—

Armed Constabulary (Detective Branch), Auckland, 17th April, 1872.

Referring to the correspondence herewith returned, I have the honor to inform you that, shortly after the despatch of my letter acknowledging receipt of same, I availed myself of the first opportunity to visit those of the South Sea Islanders in question who were located at Kohimarama, and there found that before I could be in a position to furnish the information required by the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, it would be absolutely necessary to visit the flax works of Mr. Charles Clark, at Hokianga Heads (until recently in the occupation of Messrs. N. Walker and Reid), where the bulk of the Islanders referred to are employed. Accordingly, as soon as I could get