

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Enclosure 3 in No. 58.

Sir J. FERGUSON, Bart., to the Earl of KIMBERLEY.

(No. 44.)

MY LORD,—

Adelaide, September 11, 1871.

I have the honor to acknowledge your Lordship's Circular Despatch of the 13th July, 1871, in which you inform me of the views of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the desire of this Colony and others of the Australasian group that any two or more of them should be permitted to conclude exclusive "agreements" with respect to their Customs tariffs.

2. I have communicated that Despatch to my Responsible Advisers, and by their desire have authorized its presentation to Parliament, now in Session.

3. The Government have introduced and carried through the House of Assembly a Bill to enable the Governor to enter into agreements for the free interchange of the products of this Colony with any or all of the other Australasian Colonies; and it is therefore probable that the question will before long be again brought before Her Majesty's Government.

4. In the meantime, the great increase of import duties contemplated by the Government of Victoria will render any Customs union, or even an agreement for free interchange with that Colony, still more remote; but it is probable that an arrangement will be accomplished for the free interchange of traffic with New South Wales by means of the River Murray, and possibly this may pave the way to a more general tariff agreement with that Colony, whose general principles and scale of duties differ but slightly from our own.

I have, &c.,

JAMES FERGUSON.

Enclosure 4 in No. 58.

Sir J. FERGUSON, Bart., to the Earl of KIMBERLEY.

(No. 59.)

MY LORD,—

Adelaide, 8th November 1871.

I have the honor to enclose a Memorandum which has been addressed to me by the members of the Ministry who represented South Australia in the Conference of Delegates from the several Australian Colonies lately assembled at Melbourne.

2. Your Lordship will observe that my Advisers have chosen to address to me a separate Memorandum for your consideration, rather than adopt the terms there jointly agreed to: both because the Delegates of Victoria procured the omission from them of certain sentiments which the others desired to express, and also because they deem the circumstances of this Colony to be so special as to demand a separate embodiment of the common purpose.

3. I need not comment upon the subject of the Memorandum, having had occasion to do so in other Despatches.

4. I should, however, inform your Lordship that though the Ministers whose names are appended to this paper have now quitted office, I have no doubt that the views set forth in it are fully shared by their successors, who are not yet actually appointed, and also by the Legislature and the people of this Colony.

I have, &c.,

JAMES FERGUSON.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 4 in No. 58.

MEMORANDUM by MINISTERS to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

THE proceedings of the late Conference held in Melbourne having been forwarded by las mail to the Secretary of State, we are desirous of submitting to your Excellency, for transmission to the Colonial Office, our opinion on the important subjects treated therein, as considered from a South Australian point of view.

And first, we would emphatically affirm that this Colony is second to none in loyalty to the Crown; and that the idea of separation from the British Empire would be most distasteful to the colonists at large, and one that would only be entertained at the express desire of the parent State.

We would desire to point out, for the information of the Secretary of State, and for the purpose of silencing those agitators in Great Britain who, on the pretence of economy, desire that the Colonies should be abandoned, that this province has been governed for the last thirty years, and has arrived at its present state of prosperity, without any expense whatever to the Imperial Government during that period.

It is true that in former years a small number of Imperial troops were at intervals quartered in Adelaide, the Colony providing for them barrack and other accommodation, with extra colonial pay; and when, subsequently, the Home authorities demanded that this Government should bear the expense of the detachment, to the extent of £40 a man, the Colonial Legislature passed an Act to provide payment of the same without any conditions whatever as to retaining the troops in time of need; the universal feeling being, that their appearance among us was a visible proof that we were recognized as British subjects, and therefore secure of British protection in the event of the Mother Country engaging in war.