

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure in No. 77.

MEMORANDUM by the SOLICITOR-GENERAL.

19th February, 1880.

I REGRET that the time at my disposal has not enabled me to deal with this matter earlier, nor in so full a manner as I could have wished. My remarks are limited to those portions of the Bill particularly affecting colonies, and which are indicated in the circular despatch of 16th September, 1879. This despatch directs particular attention to certain clauses of the report furnished by the Royal Commission appointed in 1875 to inquire into the laws relating to copyright. Of these the chief are clauses 215 and 216.

The first relates to the means of securing the rights of copyright proprietors in the case of foreign reprints. It is not necessary to indicate in detail the exact means by which effect could be given to the suggestion of the Commissioners; it seems enough to say that such an arrangement as proposed could be readily carried out through the Customs officers or other convenient machinery.

Clause 216 calls for no particular remark. The proposals made seem fair.

Clauses 5, 6, 7, and Part III. of the Bill, relate to colonial copyright. The above clauses secure to the author his exclusive copyright in books published in any part of Her Majesty's dominions.

Clause 38 is based on clause 231 of the report, and makes provision for the registration of copyright in books published in British possessions. There is a Copyright Act in force in New Zealand, and therefore books registered here would have the benefits they would have secured if registered in England.

In clause 39 I would suggest that the periods fixed be extended. For "one month," in subclause 1, substitute "six months;" and for "six months," in subclause 2, say "twelve months."

Clause 40 depends for its effect upon legislation in the colony. There can be no doubt it would be for the advantage of the colony to avail itself of this clause.

Clause 41 will not affect New Zealand, and the remaining clauses of this Part deal chiefly with formal matters, to which it seems unnecessary to allude at length.

Upon the whole question, I think the proposed Bill is one respecting which the Government may express its approval. A fair measure of justice to colonial authors is secured by granting them the privileges of Imperial copyright, and the provisions of Part III. seem reasonable and fair. The report is very exhaustive, and deals with a complicated subject in a very thorough manner.

The Premier.

W. S. REID.

No. 78.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir HERCULES ROBINSON, G.C.M.G., to the Right Hon. Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH.

(No. 10.)

Government House, Wellington,

SIR,—

New Zealand, 9th March, 1880.

I have the honor to forward to you a copy of a memorandum which I have received from Ministers, detailing the circumstances connected with the recent arrival of a number of amnestied Communists and time-expired convicts from New Caledonia, and, requesting me to solicit the intervention of Her Majesty's Government in remonstrating with the French Government against a repetition of such a proceeding as that complained of.

I have, &c.,

HERCULES ROBINSON.

The Right Hon. Sir Michael Hicks Beach.

Enclosure in No. 78.

MEMORANDUM for His EXCELLENCY.

MINISTERS present their respectful compliments to the Governor, and submit, for His Excellency's information, the following statement respecting the recent arrival in this colony of a number of amnestied Communists and time-expired criminal prisoners from New Caledonia:—

2. On the 10th February a telegram was received from the Minister resident in Auckland stating that the schooner "Griffin" had arrived in the Manukau Harbour from New Caledonia, and had brought thence eleven political offenders, and nine convicts for criminal offences. It was further stated that all the men had been conditionally released, and that the schooner had been chartered by the French authorities. Subsequently the Minister telegraphed that careful inquiries seemed to confirm the information he had sent. He also transmitted an extract from a letter written by a British shipping agent in New Caledonia, who stated that he had "booked