

for Auckland" a number of men who were waiting for passages by a schooner expected from Hiscock Island; and who added that, "should favourable news be received here from the passengers per 'Griffin,' there will be a number more to go from this place."

3. The Premier hereupon telegraphed to the Governments of New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria, repeating the information before stated, and asking whether those colonies had been similarly treated, and whether they would join New Zealand in urging the Imperial Government to remonstrate with France against permitting a repetition, on the part of its representatives in New Caledonia, of proceedings so likely to prove highly injurious to these colonies. The Chief Secretary of New South Wales replied, "Batches of pardoned convicts from New Caledonia have on several occasions arrived here;" while from Queensland the reply was, "On two or three occasions escaped Communists have reached our coasts, but not, as far as we are aware, with the connivance of the French authorities." Both Governments explained what had been attempted by them in the way of legislating against the landing of foreign convicts, political or criminal; both also agreed to join in the proposed remonstrance through the Agents-General for the Colonies. Victoria has not replied, no doubt owing to the fact that a general election was proceeding at the time the telegram was sent.

4. Considering it to be of importance that some action should at once be taken to protest against the wrong that had been done, the Agent-General was directed—pending such steps as, upon his return to Wellington, his Excellency might think necessary—to do what was possible, in concert with the representatives of New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria, towards causing a remonstrance to be addressed to the French Government.

5. Inquiries were continued in Auckland by the police for the purpose of ascertaining the crimes, sentences, and conditions of release of the men individually. The result was such that a second telegram was sent to the Agent-General, withdrawing the first, and directing him to suspend action until he had received letters that would be forwarded by the outgoing mail. It was found, in fact, that the "Griffin" was chartered by the French authorities, and that they paid the passages of the liberated Communists; but that the men who had been criminal convicts had paid their own passages. It was further ascertained that these latter were, so far as regards the operation of French law, free to return to France, though the amnestied Communists were not at liberty to land in France, or in any French territory.

6. The wrong done to New Zealand was thus shown to be less grave than it had been believed to be; but it remained of a character necessitating protest against repetition, and against the unfriendliness of the action, if not against a breach of good faith and of promise. A statement of all the facts was accordingly sent to the Agent-General by the mail *via* San Francisco; and he was instructed to consult with the other Agents-General, and to do what he could, pending action by His Excellency, to secure that a remonstrance should be made to the French Government against the act of its representatives in New Caledonia.

7. Copies of telegrams, reports, &c., are submitted herewith for His Excellency's information; and Ministers respectfully advise His Excellency, in anticipation of such despatches as he may be pleased to send by the next mail, to telegraph to the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the following effect:—

"Ministers request me to solicit the good offices of Her Majesty's Government in remonstrating with the French Government against making New Zealand a receptacle for liberated Communists and convicts from New Caledonia. The recent arrival of a considerable number of such men has caused very great dissatisfaction, and demands that the colony shall legislate for its own protection against further additions of the kind have been made from various parts of the colony. Full particulars respecting recent arrivals in Auckland were forwarded to Agent-General *via* San Francisco."

Wellington, 5th March, 1880.

JOHN HALL.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure in No. 78.

Papers relating to the Landing of French Convicts from New Caledonia at Auckland.

The PREMIER, New Zealand, to Sir HENRY PARKES, New South Wales.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 19th February, 1880.

SCHOONER "Griffin," from New Caledonia, arrived at Auckland, bringing eleven pardoned Communists, and nine convicts, described as ticket-of-leave men, or only "conditionally freed."

Passages of these people were paid by New Caledonian Government. Information received that second batch of Communists is ready for deportation on similar terms. This Government will be much obliged if you will inform them whether New South Wales has been treated in this manner; and, if so, what action, if any, has been taken by your Government. Further, will New South Wales unite in a request to Imperial Government, to be made through Governors, and also by Agents-General, that such remonstrances may be addressed to the Government of France as will prevent future shipment of amnestied criminals to the Australasian Colonies? I am addressing the Premiers of Victoria and Queensland to same effect. As case is urgent, I shall be obliged by early reply.

The Hon. Sir H. Parkes, Sydney.

JOHN HALL.

(A like message, on same date, to Premiers Victoria and Queensland.)