

No. 4.

(New Zealand, No. 50.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 10th August, 1885.

I have received and laid before the Queen your Despatch No. 82, of the 20th of June, transmitting an address to yourself from the House of Representatives, with one to the Queen, respectfully congratulating Her Majesty on the steps recently taken by New South Wales and other colonies with the view of aiding or tendering effectual aid to the Empire at a time of temporary difficulty.

I am commanded to request that you will inform the House of Representatives that the Queen has been much pleased with the loyal terms of their address, and that Her Majesty has been particularly gratified at the readiness which it evinces on behalf of the people of New Zealand, of all races, to assist the Empire in case of need.

I have, &c.,

FRED. STANLEY.

Governor Sir W. F. D. Jervois, G.C.M.G., C.B., &c.

No. 5.

(New Zealand, No. 53.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 14th August, 1885.

You will have learnt by telegraph that the Act for constituting a Federal Council of Australasia has been passed by both Houses of Parliament, and has received the Queen's assent. This measure had passed the House of Lords, and was awaiting its second reading in the House of Commons, when Her Majesty's present Advisers assumed office; and they lost no time in considering its provisions, and the various suggestions which had been made for its amendment. I have had the advantage of frequent and full communications with the Agents-General, who clearly explained to me the views and wishes of their respective Governments.

2. I had no difficulty in deciding that, amid the pressure of other business demanding attention at a late period of the session, there could be little or no prospect of such full discussion of the measure as would be necessary in order to do justice to, and in some measure to reconcile, the divergent opinions which some of the Colonial Governments had presented for consideration, especially as the questions raised were such as would have required more complete explanations than could be obtained by telegraph. I concluded, therefore, after careful examination of the amendments which had been placed before me, that, with one exception, to which I will presently refer, it was my duty not to propose or assent to any amendment of the Bill. Beyond adding the 31st clause, my predecessor had adhered as closely as possible to the draft prepared by the Convention at Sydney, where all the colonies were very efficiently represented; and it would have been inexpedient to make any avoidable alterations in that draft, unless such alterations could be previously considered by the same or a similar Convention.

3. The Act has accordingly been passed without any amendment in either House of Parliament beyond the omission of the last eleven words of the 31st clause. These words were not in the draft of the Bill as it was sent out to the Colonial Governments for their consideration in my predecessor's despatch of the 11th December last. He caused them to be added because, if the principle of the 31st clause were to be accepted, it was desirable that a colony, having ceased to be represented in the Federal Council, should have the power of freeing itself from the operation within its borders of any legislation which under altered circumstances might have ceased to be applicable or desirable. But my predecessor had, as I understand, in compliance with the representations of the four Colonial Governments which were most desirous to see the Council constituted, agreed to omit the words in question; and I concurred in the opinion that an addition made after the colonies had been formally consulted should not, however desirable in itself, be retained in the Bill in opposition to those representations.

4. With regard to the principle of the 31st clause there has been more discussion than on any other detail of the Act.