

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

NEW ZEALAND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY.

(CORRESPONDENCE *RE* SIR JULIUS VOGEL HOLDING OFFICE AS DIRECTOR WHILE AGENT-GENERAL.)

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 6th August, 1886.

Ordered, "That there be laid upon the table copies of all letters and telegrams which passed between Sir George Grey and Sir Julius Vogel relative to the latter holding the office of director in the New Zealand Agricultural Company whilst he was Agent-General of this colony."—SIR G. GREY.

No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, 13th February, 1879.

I have the honour to inform you that I have joined the board of directors of the New Zealand Agricultural Company (Limited), and, following the precedent established by my predecessor when he joined a public company, I have to express the hope that you will see no objection to my doing so. The primary object of the company is to promote settlement. The large estates it is to acquire are to be cut up into farms for the occupation of settlers. Frequently, since I have been in England, I have represented to the Government the desire on the part of suitable persons in this country to acquire land in New Zealand on which they could settle and pursue their avocations as farmers. I, indeed, once suggested that a block of land should be put apart for the purpose, and that I should be authorized to dispose of it. The Government, however, replied that there was a great demand for land in the colony, and that they could not put people at a distance on more favourable terms as regards absence of competition than people within the colony had to submit to. I mention these circumstances in order to show you that in my opinion the company will fulfil a really public object. I believe it will greatly benefit the colony by affording an opening to the numerous desirable people who constantly express the desire to obtain land for settlement in New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

No. 2.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 22nd April, 1879.

AGENT-GENERAL appointed additional agent, inscribed stock. Instructions by next mail. Government cannot approve connection Agricultural Company. Request you arrange early retirement therefrom.

Vogel, London.

G. GREY.

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 9th May, 1879.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the telegram at foot.* I propose deferring to the Suez or San Francisco mail my reply to it, and trust you will not object to the delay.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. Sir George Grey, K.C.B., &c.

JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 4.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,— Government Offices, Wellington, New Zealand, 19th July, 1879.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th May, enclosing copy of a telegram from me, and expressing the hope that I would not object to your delaying until the

* For telegram see above.

subsequent Suez or San Francisco mail to reply to the portion of that telegram which requested you to arrange for an early retirement from the position you hold in connection with the New Zealand Agricultural Company. I have had much pleasure in complying with your wishes.

I have, &c.,

Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G., &c., London.

G. GREY.

[The foregoing letters and telegrams have already been presented to both Houses of the General Assembly (*vide* Appendix to Journals of the House of Representatives, Sess. I., 1879, A.-10).]

No. 5.

The Hon. J. BALLANCE to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

New Zealand Immigration Office, Wellington, 26th April, 1879.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th February last, No. 146, intimating that you had joined the board of directors of the New Zealand Agricultural Company (Limited), and, in reply, to inform you that the decision of the Government was conveyed to you in the following telegram, which was despatched on the 22nd instant: "Government cannot approve connection Agricultural Company. Request you arrange early retirement therefrom."

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

J. BALLANCE.

No. 6.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 17th June, 1879.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter (No. 104) of the 26th April, 1879. I had previously received the telegram to which it refers. I wrote you last mail that I would reply to the telegram this month. The delay arose through the request of the directors that I would postpone bringing the matter before them until the return of one of their number who was absent. On the return of this gentleman I addressed to the directors a letter, of which the enclosed is a copy. I also forward copy of the reply which I have received, and, in accordance with its request, I propose to refer the matter to you for further consideration. I do not think, in courtesy, I could refuse to do so, especially as your letter and telegram do not urge upon me hasty action.

From passages which have occurred in some of the papers in New Zealand I think the objects of the company are misunderstood. It is essentially the object of the company to cut up large estates into small farms, and to settle thereon a good class of farmers. We are preparing at once to send out a number of these and their families, and will continue to supply similar emigrants. Nor will our operations be confined to one part of the colony. Ever since I have been Home I have urged on the Government the desirability of enabling me to make arrangements with farmers to proceed direct to farms in the colony engaged by them in advance. The best class of farmers is to be reached in this way. Men in every way suitable and with adequate means shrink from emigrating with uncertainty before them as to their proceedings in the colony. I am convinced that to allow an Agent-General to influence emigration of this character is to place him in the position of rendering the largest service to the colony.

The present salary of the Agent-General is inadequate, considering the expenses he is put to, if he be restrained from entering into other pursuits. Dr. Featherston was allowed to join the Board of a bank, besides that he was permitted to draw up to £500 annually for travelling expenses. It is a common thing here for officers of the Civil Service to act as directors of public companies. There is also a land company which constantly advertises that its local board in Queensland and in South Australia is respectively presided over by the Premiers of those colonies.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

JULIUS VOGEL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 6.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the DIRECTORS, New Zealand Agricultural Company (Limited).

DEAR SIRS,—

135, Cromwell Road, South Kensington, 9th June, 1879.

I have received an intimation from the Government of New Zealand that they desire me to retire from the board of the company.

It is due alike to you and myself that I should explain that when I helped to organize the company I was aware that one if not more members of the Government knew I was to do so, and approved the same. Mr. Larnach will be able to satisfy you that this was the case. I looked upon this knowledge as a tacit approval of or consent to my joining the Board, and though, when the company was formed, I asked permission, I considered my doing so was a mere formality, since the Government already knew and approved of it. It has, indeed, been stated in some of the New Zealand papers that the Government consented to my joining the Board, and, as far as I am aware, the statement was not contradicted. I was therefore quite unprepared to receive the intimation to which I have referred. I should like to have your views when you would like me to retire.

I have, &c.,

The Directors, New Zealand Agricultural Company (Limited).

JULIUS VOGEL.

Enclosure 2 in No. 6.

The DIRECTORS, New Zealand Agricultural Company (Limited), to the AGENT-GENERAL.

DEAR SIR JULIUS VOGEL,—

110, Cannon Street, London, E.C., 16th June, 1879.

The directors learn with the greatest regret that a question has arisen between the New Zealand Government and yourself with regard to this company.

The directors are of opinion that the New Zealand Government cannot be aware of the real state of the case, or of the great importance to the company of your retaining your connection with it; and they beg that you will urge upon the Government the following reasons for changing their decision. The directors sincerely trust that these representations will have the desired effect. They are as follow: (1.) That the shareholders may consider they have cause to complain if you retire, as much of the support given to the company was due to the fact that you were to be a member of the Board. (2.) That the directors certainly hold the opinion that your now leaving the board would be prejudicial to the company. (3.) That the company, having for its principal object the purchase of large estates for the express purpose of immediately cutting them up and making them available for settlement, and is now taking steps to secure settlers of a superior class, deserves every assistance at the hands of the Government, as it is in direct accordance with the principles of the public works and immigration policy, which has proved of such value to the colony. (4.) That the late Dr. Featherston, whilst acting as Agent-General for New Zealand, was also a director of the National Bank of New Zealand.

We trust that, upon the above grounds, the Government may see fit to reconsider the matter of your continuing a member of the board, and request you to urge this appeal as strongly as possible.

We are, &c.,

RICH. C. MAYNE.

THOS. SELBY TANCRED.

W. J. M. LARNACH.

W. CLARK.

R. M. ROBERTSON.

P. MAXWELL.

No. 7.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

Vogel, London.

From Wellington, 20th September, 1879.

GOVERNMENT considered letter June seventeen. Still holds former opinion. Now requests you resign director Agricultural Company at once. Reply Yes or No by telegram. Government cannot allow Agent-General take part in any politics at Home or in private business.

GREY.

No. 8.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

London, 8th October, 1879.

SOME members Government knew I was assisting organize company, and I find shareholders would not think it fair me to resign for some time to come.

VOGEL.

No. 9.

EXTRACT from a TELEGRAM received from the AGENT-GENERAL in reply to one directing him to "Wire Names of late Government who knew of his Intention to join the New Zealand Agricultural Company."

STOUT certainly, and, best my belief, Macandrew and Ballance.

No. 10.

The Hon. the PREMIER to Mr. STOUT.

Robert Stout, Esq., Dunedin.

IN reply to inquiry to Vogel, made in compliance with demand in House, as to what members of late Government knew of his joining Agricultural Company, he telegraphed as follows: "Stout certainly, and, best my belief, Macandrew and Ballance." Before we lay this before the House, would you wish to send any explanation to accompany the telegram?

Wellington, 22nd November.

J. HALL.

No. 11.

Mr. STOUT to the Hon. the PREMIER.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

JULIUS VOGEL's telegram is correct. I knew, and thought other members of the Ministry were aware, that he intended to join company. I believed then, and still believe, company, in its effort to settle people on land, must be beneficial to colony. I saw no objection to Agent-General being connected with the company, believing he was benefiting the colony by so acting.

Dunedin, 22nd November.

ROBERT STOUT.

