

No. 21.

(No. 58.)

MY LORD,—

Wellington, 28th November, 1890.

With reference to your Lordship's circular despatch of the 31st July, 1890, I have the honour, by the advice of my Ministry, to reply to your Lordship's queries as follows:—

1. The only legislation in the colony prohibiting Sunday labour is that contained in section 16 of "The Police Offences Act, 1884." This section is generally prohibitive of working at any trade or calling, transacting business, or exposing goods for sale, &c., but there are exceptions as to works of necessity or charity, and of certain specified trades and occupations. "The Police Offences Act, 1884," repealed the statute of Charles I. and Charles II. as to Sunday observance which had previously been in force in New Zealand.

2. As a matter of fact, there is no labour on Sundays in the docks or on the wharves of the ports in this colony. The only exception to the rule is that sometimes vessels carrying the English mail may discharge a few packages. Even this is usually done either in the evening or late at night.

3. Sunday labour is practically stopped, both by rules and regulations of public bodies, whose rules do not allow it, and by combination of workmen by providing for an increased rate per hour for Sunday labour.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Lord Knutsford, &c.

ONSLOW.

No. 22.

(No. 61.)

MY LORD,—

Wellington, 29th November, 1890.

I have the honour to inform your Lordship that a German squadron consisting of H.I.G.M.S. "Leipsic," "Alexandrine," and "Sophie" arrived here on the 17th November, and have been in this port ever since. They have exercised their ships in naval manœuvres within the harbour, and have engaged in torpedo practice there.

On the 24th November the French warship "Volta" arrived at Port Chalmers. She is announced to visit Lyttelton, Wellington, and Auckland. At the latter port she expects to meet the "Dubordieu," under Admiral Premesuil, early in the new year.

Application was made to me by Admiral Valois, commanding the German squadron, for leave to land an armed party on the shores of Port Nicholson, opposite to Wellington. Having in view your Lordship's circular despatch of the 31st August, 1888, I felt bound to refuse to accede to the request.

My Ministers, in reply to a previous demand made by the German Vice-Consul, intimated that such facilities as were granted in other colonies would be conceded here. Admiral Valois, relying on this, has assured me that permission to land armed men was granted to him by the Government of New South Wales, and that he had exercised an armed landing-party on the shores of Port Jervis. Upon being made acquainted with this fact I promised the Admiral that I would inquire of the Government of New South Wales whether any instructions had been received from your Lordship qualifying those laid down in the despatch to which I have already referred, or under what circumstance the permission was granted; and, further, that I would inquire of your Lordship whether any exception can be made to the instructions laid down by that despatch. I accordingly telegraphed to your Lordship as follows: "Referring to your despatch 31st August, 1888, German Admiral wishes to exercise armed landing-party. Should this point be conceded as an exceptional arrangement. It has been stated that he did so in New South Wales. Requiring immediate reply."

I have now received a reply from your Lordship to the effect that armed men should not be allowed to land (see Circular, 16th March, 1889). Under the circumstances, I have requested my Ministers to inform the German Consul that I am not authorised to make any exception in favour of Admiral Valois. I am as yet without a reply to my telegram to the Acting Governor of New South Wales.