

1893.
NEW ZEALAND.

PACIFIC ISLANDS

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

DESPATCHES RESPECTING ISSUE OF LABOUR LICENSE TO MR. JOHN ARUNDEL FOR THE
SCHOONER "IVANHOE."

No. 1.

Sir J. PRENDERGAST to Lord KNUTSFORD.

(No. 18.)

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, 16th May, 1892.

I have the honour to lay before you a copy of a letter addressed to me by Mr. John Arundel relative to the declining by Ministers here to advise me as to the grant of a license under the Imperial Acts entitled the Pacific Islanders' Protection Acts, 1872 and 1875, for Mr. Arundel's vessel. Attached to Mr. Arundel's letter is a copy of the letter referred to by him.

2. I also enclose a copy of a memorandum by Mr. Ballance (the Prime Minister) on the same subject, and copies of the "minutes" referred to by Mr. Ballance.

3. As I was of opinion that the matter was not one of purely local concern, and that Mr. Arundel would have, from the fact of want of sufficient notice of the views of Ministers here, a good ground of complaint if a license were refused to him for that reason, I exercised the powers conferred on me by the Acts referred to, though I was without the advice of Ministers.

4. There is also enclosed a copy of the license granted, which was prepared by the officers of Customs here, and is, I am informed by the Chief Officer of Customs, in the usual form.

5. So long as Ministers here permit the Customs officers to make the necessary inquiries and to perform the duties in relation to the granting of such licenses, I see no inconvenience likely to arise from the absence of Ministerial responsibility in the matter.

I have, &c.,

J. PRENDERGAST.

The Right Hon. the Lord Knutsford, G.C.M.G., &c., the Colonial Office, London, S.W.

Enclosure No. 1.

Mr. J. T. ARUNDEL to Sir J. PRENDERGAST.

SIR,—

Empire Hotel, Wellington, 29th April, 1892.

As promised verbally this morning, I beg to put before your Excellency the grounds on which, I submit, you would be justified in issuing the labour license of the schooner "Ivanhoe," which are as follows:—

The license has been applied for in the usual manner through the Collector of Customs, Auckland; the bonds signed by the captain, and also by one of the oldest, wealthiest, and most respected citizens of Auckland; and everything required by "The Pacific Islanders' Protection Act, 1872," has been complied with: and under previous Administrations no objections would have been offered, as I have continually obtained licenses from Sir William Jervois and Lord Onslow under similar circumstances.

The Premier (Mr. Ballance), however, informs me that the New Zealand Government declines to advise the issue of any labour licenses whatever on account of their opposition to the labour traffic in general, and, in consequence, the license has not been placed before your Excellency for signature.

This places me in the following unpleasant position: The "Ivanhoe" is now on her way to Tahiti to meet me, and I leave by the "Takapuna" at 5 p.m. to join the s.s. "Richmond," leaving Auckland on Tuesday afternoon for Tahiti also. On my arrival there the schooner will be employed in changing the natives employed on the various islands of which we hold leases from the Imperial Government, one of which I signed in your Excellency's presence only last week. The penalty for a vessel carrying natives without a license is, I believe, very heavy, but as the "Ivanhoe" is chartered at heavy expense (£152 per month), and my time is also very valuable, she must carry out the intention for which she was chartered.

1—A. 5.