

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

(No. 791.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W.,

25th May, 1888.

SIR,—

I beg leave to enclose copy of a letter I have received from Sir F. Abel, Organizing Secretary of the Imperial Institute, requesting to be informed which of the New Zealand exhibits, formerly in the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, and still in his charge, are to be regarded as final gifts to the Institute.

The circumstances under which the New Zealand exhibits were placed in charge of the officers of the Institute appear in the correspondence at the time; and, whatever may have been the case with exhibits from other colonies, there was no understanding between those officers and myself differing in any way from what was expressed in the correspondence. Accordingly, when I received orders to send out such of the New Zealand exhibits as seemed best for the Melbourne Exhibition, they were at once returned to me. I should now be glad, having regard to the reasons given by Sir F. Abel for his present inquiry, if you would telegraph instructions to me whether the remainder of the exhibits (list of which accompanied my memorandum, No. 430, of the 23rd March last), are to be finally handed over to the Institute, or, if not, what is to be done with them.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 3.

Sir F. A. ABEL to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Imperial Institute, London, 23rd May, 1888.

It is no doubt within your recollection that, shortly after the close of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, and when proposals for continuing that Exhibition in some form in the succeeding year were under consideration, a number of exhibits from the New Zealand Court were permitted to remain with a view to their being utilised in any fresh collections which might be prepared. The articles referred to were eventually handed over to the custody of the Committee appointed by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales for establishing and organizing the Imperial Institute, and when I entered upon the duties of Organizing Secretary they were placed in my care, it being tacitly understood that they were gifts to, and for the objects of, the Imperial Institute.

Considerable expense was, and is, being incurred in properly stowing these articles and preserving them, as far as possible, from injury.

At various times within the last eighteen months I have received requisitions, in some cases from Colonial Governments, and in others from private persons, who originally contributed the exhibits, to permit the removal of some of them to Colonial and Provincial Exhibitions, and they have been returned into my charge, in some instances more or less injured. On more than one occasion proprietary rights have been claimed by or on behalf of the original exhibitors.

The building operations in connection with the Institute are likely to necessitate, within the next few weeks, the removal of the objects in question, which are at present housed in the building at South Kensington known as the Imperial Institute Stores, and, taking into consideration the fact that the expenses of removing and restowing the goods will have to be defrayed from the moneys subscribed by the public for the objects of the Institute, I should feel bound to advise the Organizing Committee to incur outlay only upon such articles as are fully conceded to be absolute gifts to the Institute, and have thereby become part of its property.

I have therefore the honour to request that you will be so good as to inform me, at your earliest possible convenience, which, if any, of the objects transferred by your authority from the New Zealand Court of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition to the Imperial Institute Stores, are not to be regarded as gifts to the Institute.

I am, &c.,

F. A. ABEL,

Organizing Secretary.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

No. 4.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

(No. 1296.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 6th September, 1888.

SIR,—

I beg leave to express my thanks for your telegram of the 7th August, which I had asked you to send me on receipt of my letter of the 25th May, No. 791, with regard to the remaining exhibits out of those handed over to the officers of the Imperial Institute at the close of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition. I have informed the Organizing Committee that these exhibits are now finally presented by the Government to the Institute.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

No. 5.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

(No. 1856.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 29th December, 1888.

SIR,—

I beg permission to inform you that the Governing Body of the Imperial Institute, at the command of the Prince of Wales, have for some time past been engaged in taking steps for the organization of a Commercial Intelligence Department, which it is expected will be productive of