

Commons, numbered 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 11. It also contains the first despatch, which was written on the 2nd June, 1892, marked "Confidential," and therefore not laid before the General Assembly last session. It further intimates that neither the confidential despatch referred to—the despatch of the 3rd December, 1892—nor Lord Ripon's reply thereto of the 17th February, 1893, was seen by the late Premier. It also requests that the memorandum left by Lord Onslow for the information of His Excellency, and seen by the late Premier, should be included in the correspondence to be laid before both Houses.

In compliance with His Excellency's wish, the despatches in question will be printed and laid before both Houses.

The Premier again respectfully desires to point out the inconvenience that may be caused by the Governor delaying placing despatches before his Advisers. The Premier trusts that in future His Excellency will always take his Ministers into his entire confidence when communicating with the Secretary of State. The Premier would also very respectfully point out the necessity that arises for a complete record being kept of despatches which have been forwarded. Such a record would render it impossible for any inadvertence to occur in future, such as that to which his attention has been called—namely, that of an important omission in paragraph 7 of His Excellency's despatch of the 3rd December, 1892; which despatch had been forwarded for the purpose of being printed. If the error had not been discovered by His Excellency the despatch would have been published, and, on comparison with the original, the omission would have been apparent.

The Premier requests that a copy of this memorandum may be laid on the table of the House of Representatives and Legislative Council respectively, and that a copy be also sent to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

R. J. SEDDON.

MEMORANDUM for His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

(No. 10.)

Premier's Office, Wellington, 3rd July, 1893.

THE Premier begs to reply to His Excellency's memorandum of the 22nd ultimo. This memorandum intimates that "His Excellency did not mention that Despatch No. 12, page 41, in the return alluded to in his memorandum of the 21st ultimo, and which he did not send to the Clerk of the Executive Council for publication, was omitted, because, in the telegram in which Lord Ripon informed him that he was about to lay the correspondence in question on the table of Parliament, he added that he intended to omit the despatch of the 16th August unless the Governor particularly wished it printed; and His Excellency, having replied that he did not desire its publication, considering it of no importance, did not expect to see it in this return, and therefore did not send it to the Premier."

The Premier would respectfully point out that in this, as in the other cases, necessity is shown for the usual course being followed, and that all despatches, unless those considered by His Excellency as strictly confidential, should be laid before Ministers or the Executive Council.

It might have happened, had the House met a little earlier, that the despatches in question would have been published with important omissions therefrom, not shown by our parliamentary records. At the same time copies of the same despatches would have been correctly printed in the records of the House of Commons.

The practice of submitting despatches to the Prime Minister has been invariably followed by His Excellency's predecessors. The despatches have always been open to the Prime Minister. The question was raised in 1873. The attached correspondence took place between the then Governor, Sir James Fergusson, and his Advisers, and the resolution which forms part of the papers was passed by both branches of the Legislature.

The Premier would also respectfully draw His Excellency's attention to Nos. 186 and 188 of the Colonial Office Regulations, page 324, which clearly point out the course to be followed respecting despatches to and from the Secretary of State.

The Premier respectfully requests that a copy of this memorandum may be laid on the table of the House of Representatives and Legislative Council respectively, and that a copy be also sent to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

R. J. SEDDON.

Correspondence between His Excellency Sir James Fergusson and Ministers relative to the Publication of Despatches to and from the Secretary of State.

MEMORANDUM for MINISTERS.

(Confidential.)

THE Governor requests that Ministers will be so good as to examine copies of certain despatches which were marked for printing and presentation to Parliament by the late Governor, and are now in Mr. Amelius Smith's hands.

The Governor would not desire to withdraw despatches which for any reason personal to himself Sir George Bowen desired to make public, but he cannot forget that the presentation to Parliament will be his own act, and that he and his Advisers are alone responsible for that step.

He would, in the first place, call the attention of Ministers to the fact that in the despatches now in the hands of the printer are several in which the various changes of Ministry which occurred during the last session and during the recess are reported to the Secretary of State, and also several in which the Secretary of State acknowledges their receipt.

The Governor does not think it a very convenient course to lay before Parliament the terms in which he reports such changes, and, if he does no more than report the occurrence of a change of Ministry, the presentation of the despatch becomes a mere and useless formality. But he would not desire to arrest upon his first arrival the process already so far advanced, were there not, in his