

The sum of £3,700 which, as I contended, was expenditure incurred by the Government without any reference to myself, was made up in the following manner:—

Mr. Friberg, 18s. per diem with passage money £120, estimated at	£400
Mr. Barclay, £250 salary, with travelling allowance, 20s. per diem, estimated at	400
Mr. Birch	700
Mr. Seaton	700
Mr. Farnall	700
Mr. Auld	400
Mr. Mason	400
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	£3,700

I did not say, nor can it be inferred from my letter, that Mr. Buller's salary of £400 a year as Acting Secretary formed part of the expenditure for which I declined to be held responsible or that this was one of "the appointments which were, in my judgment, wholly unnecessary;" on the contrary, in the very letter under notice, I referred to the fact that Mr. Buller's engagement had terminated at the end of the year, although he had obtained from the Government an extension of his leave, and I submitted the necessity of my having a private and confidential secretary at the same salary (£400 a year), this being one of the offices enumerated in Schedule C to that letter.

It is perfectly well known that I was consulted on the subject of Mr. Buller's mission to England, and that I agreed to utilize his services in a secretarial capacity whilst here. It is equally well known that Mr. Buller's main object in coming to England was to superintend the publication of his work on the "Birds of New Zealand," and that, to assist him in this undertaking, the Government gave him leave of absence on exceptionally liberal terms. At the same time, the amount of remuneration to be paid to Mr. Buller was fixed at £400 per annum, in addition to his half-pay of £200 per annum. In my despatch of 11th July, No. 499, I reported fully the nature of the general and special services rendered by Mr. Buller, and stated that, considering him fully entitled to the sum named by the Hon. Mr. Gisborne, I had paid him accordingly.

With reference to the Hon. Mr. O'Rorke's statement, that I "have retained Mr. Buller in my office since 31st December last, in defiance of the positive instructions of the Government not to employ him," I beg to offer the following observations.

In compliance with the terms of the Hon. Mr. Gisborne's letter of 5th July (No. 65, 1872), Mr. Buller ceased to draw salary as secretary on the 31st December last. On the 18th February, in pursuance of the instructions I had received, I paid him the sum of £200, but not till I found that the vote had passed the Assembly.

On the 1st March, Mr. Buller, at my request, and under circumstances fully set forth in my letter of 16th May (No. 310, 1873), rejoined my staff as secretary, and postponed his arrangements for returning to the Colony. On the receipt of the Hon. Mr. Vogel's telegram (22nd April), in reply to mine of 28th March, Mr. Buller felt that he had no alternative but to tender his resignation, and from that time to the present he has continued to discharge the duties of secretary, and to draw the salary.

In compliance with the Hon. Mr. O'Rorke's request, I have the honor to forward (by book post) twelve copies of the Rev. Peter Barclay's "Notes on New Zealand," prepared under my immediate direction, and very carefully revised. This pamphlet has been very widely circulated, and has, I believe, done much good to the cause of emigration, by disseminating reliable information, and stimulating an interest in the Colony among the classes from which our emigrants are chiefly drawn. It was printed at the expense of the Government, and is published nominally at 2d. a copy, but a large supply has been issued to the various local agents for gratuitous distribution, and many applications are made for it at this office. It has been translated into Gaelic, for circulation in the West Highlands; also into German, for distribution among visitors to the New Zealand Court at the Vienna Exhibition.

The want of some such publication had become very pressing, as I was receiving, almost daily, letters from intending emigrants, asking for information about the Colony on a variety of subjects, which it was quite impossible to communicate in writing.

I am glad that my selection of Mr. E. A. Smith as Despatching Officer has so entirely met with approval.

I note that the general scheme of officers' salaries, proposed in Schedule C, is approved, and it is gratifying to me to learn that the Government desire me to exercise the utmost discretionary power in the arrangements generally of my department, and that the arduous and responsible character of my duties is fully recognized.

I have, &c.,

I. E. FEATHERSTON,

Agent-General.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington, N.Z.