

relegated. All they would say was that "it was not impossible to admit that the Government estimate approached the truth." Nevertheless, they still urged that, the greater was the number the greater was the gravity of the peril to society and the clearer the necessity for the Bill.

The debate on the second reading extended from the 5th to the 13th February. The Bill was denounced by several Senators in unmeasured terms; but the Minister of the Interior (M. Waldeck-Rousseau) repeated the official arguments as to the absolute necessity of transportation, and announced the determination of the Government to go on with the scheme in Guiana. In none of the speeches was any attempt made to meet the objections to its application to New Caledonia. A general feeling, indeed, seems to have arisen that the Ministers had given up New Caledonia, and an endeavour was made to pin the Government to this, on the ground that it was now impossible to mistake M. Waldeck-Rousseau's meaning, and that for the term "colonies" the Senate must read "Guiana only;" but the Minister would only say it was to be chiefly Guiana (*notamment la Guyane*).

The Senate was evidently determined to pass the Bill in some shape, and on a division the second reading was carried by the large majority of 178. But everything was left to the Executive: the place of relegation, the numbers to be sent, the *régime* to be applied, and the cost. All this was to be fixed by Executive regulation, six months being allowed to the Government for promulgating the first regulation, after which the law was to come into force.

It is at this stage that we have ventured to ask your Lordship to make another appeal to the French Government, before the Bill goes back to the Chamber of Deputies. We have more than once acknowledged the obligations of the colonies to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris for the manner in which he has so often pressed their wishes upon M. Ferry; and we hope Lord Lyons may see, in the present state of the Bill, a fair opportunity for renewing his efforts, and inducing the French Ministers to concede what Australasia so earnestly desires. There can no longer be a pretence that New Caledonia is able to take any *récidivistes*. Surely it would be a wanton thing to send them there now, in the face of the evidence that has come to light, and of the repeated protests of the French colonists themselves. In the confident hope that their own reiterated remonstrances would not be always rejected by a great and friendly nation, the English colonies have refrained as yet from passing those measures of self-protection to which the Imperial Government has acknowledged that assent could not now be refused. They desire nothing better than to live in amity with the French settlers, and to see the French colony flourish. The Government of the Republic can now do what the free colonists of both nations alike have asked, without giving up the point which M. Ferry refused to yield; and the change in the structure of the Bill, which leaves absolute power to the Executive, may enable a friendly understanding to be come to that New Caledonia should not be chosen for the relegation, without derogating in any way from the honour or the dignity of France.

We have, &c.,

ARTHUR BLYTH.

R. MURRAY-SMITH.

SAUL SAMUEL.

J. F. GARRICK.

F. D. BELL.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., &c.

No. 13.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 12th March, 1885.

I transmit herewith copies of a letter I have received from the Colonial Office on the subject of the *Récidiviste* Bill, and of my reply.

I am unable to send you the enclosures mentioned by the Colonial Office, as they were in original, and I had to return them immediately after perusal. They consist, however, of communications from the Foreign Office to the Colonial Office, enclosing despatches from Lord Lyons, of which I annex a list. You will appreciate these new proofs of the constant interest which has been manifested throughout by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris.

In one of his letters Lord Lyons says: "The Bill sent up by the Chamber of Deputies has, as your Lordship will have observed, been so much modified by the Senate as to have become, in fact, almost a new Bill. It will now go back to the Chamber with the Senate amendments, and it is not certain that those amendments will be agreed to."

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure No. 1.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the AGENT-GENERAL for New Zealand.

SIR,—

Colonial Office, Downing Street, 11th March, 1885.

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letters of the 11th and 20th ultimo, forwarding a *précis* of the supplementary report of the French Senate Committee on the *Récidiviste* Bill and notes of debates in the Senate on the second reading of the Bill.

I am also to transmit to you for your perusal copies of three letters, with their enclosures, on the same subject, from the Foreign Office, which it is requested may be returned at your earliest convenience.

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

JOHN BRAMSTON.