

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

FEDERATION AND ANNEXATION:

A FEDERAL COUNCIL AND NEW GUINEA PROTECTORATE.

(FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE RELATING THERETO.)

[In continuation of A.-4c*, 1885.]

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

No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 22nd July, 1885.

The Secretary of State called the Agents-General before him yesterday to confer with them respecting the Federal Council Bill.

In my last letter (16th July, No. 586) I explained that the position had become complicated by a series of new amendments just proposed by New South Wales. This complication added materially to the difficulties in the way of the amendments proposed by New Zealand, because the House of Commons will not at this period of the session give any time to "contentious" business. A.-4c*, 1885,
No. 138.

As regards your own amendments I was placed in some embarrassment. Immediately upon receiving your telegram of the 18th May I had done my best at the Colonial Office to get a favourable consideration for Mr. Griffith's suggestion, though it was doubtful whether the Imperial Government would so far change the structure of the Bill as to agree to it. As I long ago informed you, there was no chance of Lord Derby himself agreeing to the general principle of "subsequent adoption" of all Federal laws; and in consequence of this I had pressed very strongly upon his Lordship to retain clause 31. In my letter to the Colonial Office on the 2nd June I represented Mr. Griffith's suggestion in as favourable a light as I could, calling attention to the fact that the principle of "subsequent adoption" was to some extent already in the Bill. Immediately afterwards, however, there came the change of Ministry here, and an agreement between the two great parties that the session should be wound up as soon as possible. The Federal Council Bill was one of the few measures agreed to be passed; and it went through the second reading easily: but there was very little time for considering any structural amendments in Committee, and Lord Salisbury's Ministry were very unwilling to interfere more than could be helped with what their predecessors had done, especially as it was an open secret that Lord Derby himself objected to the omission of the 31st clause. I was often reminded of the strong pressure I had tried to use myself for the retention of that clause, and I soon found that the difficulty of introducing any new principle would be very great. A.-4c, 1885,
No. 103.

The matter was in this stage when, a few days after sending in my letter of the 2nd June, I received Sir Julius Vogel's memorandum of the 23rd April, with directions to circulate it among the members of both Houses. The memorandum was written some time before the Queensland proposal, and the attitude taken up in it by your Government was, of course, very different from the one consequent on your acceptance of that proposal. Immediately the memorandum was made public I was taxed, as I mentioned in my letter of the 15th June (No. 731), with the apparent inconsistency of the New Zealand proposals, and with the fact that, while the proposal I had made was contradicted by the wider one of the memorandum, the clause which I had pressed for so strongly was declared by my own Government to be of no importance. Under these circumstances it was clear that very little attention would be paid to any fresh representation of mine; and, on being asked by the Colonial Office whether I wished any other papers to be presented before the Bill went into Committee, I thought the best thing to do was to send in your letters of the 23rd May and the 5th June. These were at once published in a new parliamentary paper, copy of which I transmit herewith; and you will find that I took occasion to strengthen as far as I could the argument I had already used about the principle of "subsequent adoption." A.-4c*, 1885,
No. 120.
A.-1, 1885,
No. 46.
A.-4c*, 1885,
No. 123.
A.-4c, 1885,
Nos. 106, 109,
and 110.