

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

RECIPROCITY WITH FIJI AND TONGA

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO).

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

No. 1.

The Hon. Sir JULIUS VOGEL to Rev. SHIRLEY W. BAKER.

SIR,—

Waiwera, New Zealand, 11th February, 1886.

I have the honour to place before you the result of several interesting interviews which I have had with you. At these interviews we considered in all its aspects the prospect of increasing and developing the commercial relations between this colony and the several groups of islands nearest to it. With the concurrence of my colleague the Premier I have discussed with you the terms of a Customs arrangement which would tend to promote the purposes to which I have referred. It is understood between us that the conclusions we have come to are subject, first, to the approval of the Executive Government, and, next, to that of the General Assembly, as far as New Zealand is concerned, and that they are subject as regards yourself to the approval of your King and Parliament. Moreover, as we concurred in thinking that any agreement we should make would only be desirable if Fiji is willing to join in it, the provisional arrangement we have discussed is dependent on Fiji adopting it. It is also agreed that the arrangement may be extended to the Samoan, Cook, Society, and Marquesas groups of islands if approved by their several rulers.

Appended hereto is a copy of the list I have already submitted to you, showing in detail the several articles the produce or manufacture of New Zealand which it is proposed shall be admitted into Tonga on the terms and conditions specified therein, together with a copy of the list you have handed to me of goods the produce of Tonga which it is proposed shall be admitted into New Zealand on equally favourable terms.

It is mutually agreed between us that, whatever further steps may be taken to give effect to the arrangement sketched out above, the following articles—namely, spirits of all kinds; manufactured tobacco, cigars and cigarettes, and refined sugar—in so far as New Zealand is concerned, shall be excluded from consideration, and that they shall be chargeable in this colony with the full rates of duty leviable on them for the time being.

I understood it to be your desire that any agreement or treaty that may result from our present negotiations shall be in force for the term of seven years from the date of its being entered into, and that it shall thereafter be terminable on six months' notice being given by either party to it.

It is to be understood, in the event of a treaty with Tonga being entered into, that ports of entry will be appointed in the various islands of that group to which vessels usually resort for trading purposes; that the same privileges that exist in New Zealand as to warehousing, removing from port to port, and exporting goods under bond will be allowed in Tonga for goods from New Zealand; and that no charges shall be made in Tonga for Customs entries in respect of such goods.

The Hon. Shirley W. Baker,
Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tonga, &c., Waiwera.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL.

Enclosure.

LIST of ARTICLES the Produce or Manufacture of New Zealand which it is proposed should be admitted into Tonga on the Terms specified below.

To be admitted Duty-free.	Similar Articles imported from other Countries to be charged with Duties not lower than the under-mentioned Rates.
Aerated and Mineral Waters Agricultural Implements Animals Bacon and Hams Beef and Pork, salted Biscuits Boots and Shoes Books and Printed Papers Bricks, Lime, and Cement Butter, Cheese, and Lard... .. Bullion Candles Coals Cordage, Rope, and Twine Drain Pipes and Tiles Flour Fruits and Vegetables, dried, tinned, or preserved Furniture and Upholstery Machinery of all kinds for manufacturing purposes; Boilers, Engines, and parts thereof Manures of all kinds Plants, Shrubs, Trees, and Seeds Potatoes and Vegetables of all kinds, raw Tallow Timber— Sawn, rough Dressed Shingles and laths Palings Posts Rails	15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . Free. 2d. the lb. 2s. 6d. the cwt. ½d. the lb. 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . Free. 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 2d. the lb. Free. 2d. the lb. Free. 5s. the cwt. 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 1s. the 100lb. 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 10 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . Free. Free. Free. 3s. the cwt. 1s. the 100ft. superficial. 2s. the 100ft. superficial. 1s. the 1,000. 1s. the 100. 4s. the 100. 2s. the 100.
Articles to be admitted at <i>half</i> of the current Rates of Duty.	Similar Articles imported from other Countries to be charged with Duties not lower than the under-mentioned Rates.
Apparel Beer, Ale, and Porter— In bulk In bottle Boats Confectionery... .. Doors and Sashes Drugs and Apothecaries' Wares Earthenware Fencing-wire Fish, fresh, dried, or salted Fish, tinned or preserved Grain and Pulse Jams, Jellies, Marmalade, and Preserves Leather and all Manufactures of Leather not otherwise enumerated Meats, frozen Meats, tinned or preserved Oil of all kinds Pickles and Sauces Soap Manufactures of Wood not otherwise enumerated, or of wood and metal, or other materials Woollens and Woollen Manufactures, and Textile Fabrics of wool mixed with other materials	16 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 1s. the gallon. 1s. 6d. the gallon. 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . Doors, 3s. each; Sashes, 3s. per pair. 10 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 2s. the cwt. 1d. the lb. 1½d. the lb. 1s. the 100lb. 1½d. the lb. 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 1d. the lb. 1d. the lb. 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 1s. the dozen pints. 2d. the lb. 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> . 15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> .

LIST of ARTICLES the Produce or Manufacture of Tonga which it is proposed should be admitted into New Zealand on the Terms specified below.

To be admitted Duty-free.—Copra, cotton, wool, candle-nuts, whale-oil, pea-nuts and all nuts for manufacturing purposes, all fresh fruits—oranges, lemons, pine-apples, &c.—and arrowroot.

To be admitted at half the current Rate of Duty.—Unrefined sugar, unmanufactured tobacco (the same to be subject to excise duty when manufactured in New Zealand), coffee (raw), tea, ginger and all spices, desiccated cocoa-nuts, all preserved fruits, fungus, cocoa-nut fibre, cotton-seeds, lime-juice, dried bananas, cocoa, unmanufactured sarsaparilla, maize, and olives.

No. 2.

REV. SHIRLEY W. BAKER to the Hon. Sir JULIUS VOGEL.

SIR,—

Waiwera, 11th February, 1886.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date, referring to the result of several interviews which I have had the honour of having with you relative to the terms of a Customs arrangement between New Zealand and Tonga, and a copy also of the list of the produce and manufactures of New Zealand and Tonga on which it is proposed such arrangement shall be based, subject to the approval of the Executive Government and Parliament.

In the event of the consent of the Fiji Government being obtained to such Customs arrangement, I shall have great pleasure in undertaking to advise His Majesty the King of Tonga and the Tonga Parliament to adopt the same, subject to the conditions contained in your letter.

I have, &c.,

SHIRLEY W. BAKER,

The Hon. Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G., Colonial Treasurer, &c.

Premier of Tonga.

No. 3.

Hon. Sir JULIUS VOGEL to F. J. Moss, Esq., M.H.R.

SIR,—

Department of Trade and Customs, Wellington, 23rd March, 1886.

With a view to promoting commercial intercourse with Fiji, the Government have determined to open negotiations with that colony to arrange for a commercial treaty between it and New Zealand; such arrangement, of course, to be subject to the approval of the General Assembly. As you have consented to proceed to Fiji for the above purpose, I have now the honour to inform you that the Government have appointed you, in conjunction with Mr. Seed, the Secretary of Customs, to conduct the negotiations on behalf of New Zealand; and you will be jointly accredited by His Excellency the Governor to the Administrator of the Government of Fiji.

The Rev. Shirley Baker, Premier of Tonga, with whom a provisional arrangement has been made for including that group in the proposed treaty, will accompany you to Fiji, and has promised to use his best exertions to promote this undertaking. Your knowledge of the productions and resources of Fiji during your residence in that country, combined with your long experience in this colony as a business man and a member of the General Assembly, eminently fit you for this delicate task; and the Government have every confidence that you will carry it out with tact and discretion, and with due regard to the interests of this colony. The Government do not consider it necessary, therefore, to fetter you with any detailed instructions; but it is to be understood that the lines laid down in the draft agreement with Tonga, copy of which, together with correspondence between the Premier of that group and myself, is enclosed, are to be adhered to, liberty being given for any recommendation for a deviation from or modification of that agreement which may be considered desirable to suit any special circumstances in relation to the commerce of Fiji.

I shall be glad if you will make it convenient to leave Auckland for Fiji by the "Arawata" on the 4th proximo.

I have, &c.,

F. J. Moss, Esq., M.H.R., &c., Auckland.

JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 4.

F. J. Moss, Esq., M.H.R., to the Hon. Sir JULIUS VOGEL.

SIR,—

Auckland, 29th March, 1886.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter No. 138/22, of the 23rd instant, informing me that the Government have appointed me, in conjunction with Mr. Seed, to conduct negotiations with the Government of Fiji for the arrangement of a commercial treaty with New Zealand.

I have also to acknowledge receipt of the draft agreement with Tonga enclosed in the above letter for our guidance in dealing with Fiji.

I fully appreciate the importance of the object which the Government have in view, and will be prepared to leave Auckland by the "Arawata" on the 4th April, as you suggest.

I have, &c.,

F. J. Moss.

The Hon. Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G., Colonial Treasurer, Wellington.

No. 5.

The COMMISSIONER of TRADE and CUSTOMS to W. SEED, Esq.

SIR,—

Department of Trade and Customs, Wellington, 23rd March, 1886.

With a view to promoting commercial intercourse with Fiji, the Government have determined to open negotiations with that colony to arrange for a commercial treaty between it and New Zealand; such arrangement, of course, to be subject to the approval of the General Assembly.

Mr. Moss, M.H.R., and yourself have been appointed to conduct these negotiations on behalf of New Zealand, and you will be jointly accredited by His Excellency the Governor to the Administrator of the Government of Fiji.

The Rev. Shirley Baker, Premier of Tonga, with whom a provisional agreement has been made for including that group in the proposed treaty, will accompany you to Fiji, and has promised to use his best exertions to promote this undertaking.

The Government have every confidence in your ability to carry out the duty herein referred to with judgment and due regard to the interests of this colony, and it is not considered necessary, therefore, to fetter you with any detailed instructions; but it is to be understood that the lines laid down in the draft agreement with Tonga, copy of which, together with correspondence between the Premier of that group and myself, is enclosed, are to be adhered to, liberty being given for any recommendation for a deviation from, or modification of, that agreement which may be considered desirable to suit any special circumstances in relation to the commerce of Fiji.

I have to request that you will make all necessary arrangements to enable you to leave Auckland for Fiji by the "Arawata" on the 4th proximo.

William Seed, Esq., Secretary of Customs, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 6.

MEMORANDUM from the Hon. Sir J. VOGEL to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

THE Commissioner of Trade and Customs has the honour to inform His Excellency, in accordance with a decision come to in Cabinet, that Ministers are anxious to increase and develop as far as possible commercial relations between this colony and Fiji and other contiguous groups of islands in the Pacific. With this object they propose to send Mr. F. J. Moss, a member of the House of Representatives, formerly a resident in Fiji, and Mr. W. Seed, the permanent head of the Customs Department, to Fiji, to endeavour on behalf of New Zealand to open negotiations with the Government of that colony, subject to the approval of the General Assembly of New Zealand, for the admission to each, on mutually favourable terms, of the staple articles of the two countries.

The Rev. Shirley Baker, Premier of Tonga, has expressed himself desirous, on behalf of the Government of that group, of entering into similar arrangements, and he will accompany the representatives of New Zealand to Fiji.

Ministers would feel obliged if His Excellency would be so good as to furnish Messrs. Moss and Seed with letters to the Officer Administering the Government of Fiji, explaining the object of their mission and accrediting them to the Government of that colony as official representatives from New Zealand for the purpose indicated above.

Government Buildings, Wellington, 23rd March, 1886.

JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 7.

The GOVERNOR, New Zealand, to the OFFICER ADMINISTERING the GOVERNMENT, Fiji.

SIR,—

Government House, Wellington, 23rd March, 1886.

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have received a memorandum from my Responsible Advisers—of which a copy is enclosed—representing a desire to enter into a commercial treaty with Fiji, and requesting me to accredit to your Excellency the delegates named therein, who have been intrusted with the duty of endeavouring to arrange the necessary preliminaries for the proposed treaty.

I beg, therefore, to commend the gentlemen referred to—Messrs. F. J. Moss and W. Seed—to your good offices; and I trust that you will be able favourably to entertain the proposals that they will, on behalf of this colony, submit for your consideration.

I have, &c.,

WM. F. D. JERVOIS.

His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government of Fiji.

No. 8.

The COMMISSIONER of TRADE and CUSTOMS to the COLONIAL SECRETARY, Fiji.

SIR,—

Wellington, New Zealand, 22nd March, 1886.

The Government of New Zealand are most anxious to respond to the overtures which have been made from your colony to promote commercial intercourse with Fiji. The geographical position of that colony in relation to New Zealand, and the different character of the productions of each country, afford conditions highly favourable to a mutually-profitable trade being carried on between them; yet up to the present time the trade has been very limited. The Government of this colony are of opinion that a reciprocity treaty might be entered into by the two colonies on terms which, without injuriously affecting the Customs revenue of either, would have the effect of rapidly increasing the trade between them.

It is obvious that it would be impossible to arrive at any satisfactory agreement within a reasonable period by means of written correspondence as to the terms on which such a treaty should be settled, and it has therefore been thought desirable to despatch delegates from this colony to negotiate with your Government on the subject. Those delegates are Mr. F. J. Moss, a member of our House of Representatives, who was formerly a resident in Fiji, and Mr. W. Seed, the permanent head of the Customs Department here, an officer of high standing in the Civil Service and of long experience. These gentlemen will be officially accredited to your Government by the Governor of this colony, and I trust that on their arrival in Fiji it may be convenient for your Government to treat with them.

I may observe that, whilst material advantages to the two countries would undoubtedly result from increased trade between them, still, those that must accrue to Fiji from its finding in New Zealand a ready outlet for its produce are so manifest that I am sanguine that your Government will not be indifferent to them, and that they will be disposed to co-operate cordially with this colony in coming to an arrangement by which those advantages may be permanently secured. Necessarily, any arrangements that may be provisionally agreed upon will be subject to the approval of the General Assembly.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Suva, Fiji.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 9.

The Hon Sir J. VOGEL to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Government Buildings, Wellington, 25th March, 1886.

I have the honour to forward you copies of letters which have passed between the Hon. and Rev. Shirley Baker, Premier of Tonga, and myself, concerning a Customs agreement with Tonga, Fiji, &c. The agreement therein proposed was approved by the Cabinet; and Mr. Moss, M.H.R., and Mr. Seed, Secretary of Customs, are proceeding with the Rev. Mr. Baker to Fiji, with the view of submitting the proposals to the Governor there.

The object of making the arrangement with Tonga, and again making that subject to an arrangement with Fiji, was to get the aid of the Tongan Government: besides that, Mr. Baker is likely to render aid in inducing the Government at Samoa to fall in with the same arrangement.

The legal position of this matter seems to me to be this: New Zealand, under our Constitution Act, has power to arrange with Fiji or any colony. Subsequently, by separate Act, the other Australian Colonies were given similar powers. The Act (36 Vict., cap. 22, "The Australian Colonies Duties Act, 1873") does not include Fiji; but, as Fiji has no Constitution by Act, the Crown could authorize the agreement with New Zealand. As to the agreements with Tonga, Samoa, and Tahiti, the Crown would probably have to make them on behalf of New Zealand.

I hope no technical difficulties will be allowed to interfere with arrangements which would so vastly benefit the trade and prospects of all the islands concerned, including New Zealand.

As we do not know the views of the Government of Fiji, and have not submitted the matter to Parliament, it may seem premature to bring it before you. But you take such interest in all matters relating to the islands, and are so well acquainted with the subject, that it is desirable that no information should be withheld from you. Besides, if the matter is to proceed, your being in possession of the papers will enable us to cable you; and with that view I append suitable code phrases.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, 7, Westminster Chambers,
London, S.W.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 10.

His Honour the ADMINISTRATOR of the GOVERNMENT of FIJI to His Excellency the GOVERNOR of NEW ZEALAND.

SIR,—

Government House, Suva, Fiji, 15th April, 1886.

I have had the honour of receiving your Excellency's despatch of the 23rd ultimo, accrediting to me Messrs. F. J. Moss and W. Seed as the representatives of your Excellency's Government in respect of a commercial treaty into which this Government is invited to enter with New Zealand.

It has afforded me pleasure to receive the gentlemen named, both of whom I have known for many years.

The proposals of your Excellency's Government have reached me somewhat in the way of a surprise; but have, notwithstanding, received from myself and Advisers all the consideration possible in the brief space of time at command.

I regret to add that my Government does not find the proposals submitted by Messrs. Moss and Seed acceptable; but, with the object of promoting commerce between the two colonies, it is ready to make a counter-proposal and send to New Zealand a member of Government to discuss the project with your Excellency's Ministers.

It is hardly necessary for me to observe that any arrangements made would, as regards Fiji, be subject to the approval of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.,
JOHN B. THURSTON.

His Excellency Sir W. F. D. Jervois, G.C.M.G., Governor of New Zealand.

No. 11.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, Fiji, to the COMMISSIONER of TRADE and CUSTOMS, New Zealand.
 SIR,— Colonial Secretary's Office, Fiji, 15th April, 1886.

I am directed by His Honour the Officer Administering the Government of this Colony to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd March.

His Honour observes with much pleasure the desire on the part of the Government of New Zealand to promote and extend commercial intercourse between New Zealand and Fiji; and I am instructed to assure you that His Honour on his part entertains a strong wish that the trade between the two colonies should be fostered in every manner that is practicable.

2. His Honour has had the pleasure and advantage of conferring at some length with the gentlemen despatched by your Government as delegates, and has from their knowledge and experience obtained much information that cannot but be of value in further considering the terms of any agreement that may be entered into to promote the freer interchange of the products of the two colonies.

3. His Honour would have been pleased had he been put in a position to consider before the arrival of the delegates the proposals of your Government, which first became known to him when stated by the delegates, and which consequently have not received the same amount of careful consideration in detail that would otherwise have been the case. This Government will, however, be prepared to refer the whole question of an arrangement of the nature proposed to a special Committee of the Legislative Council of this colony, consisting of an equal number of official and non-official members.

4. This Government will thereafter, if deemed advisable, submit proposals for the consideration of the Government of New Zealand, and will, after giving your Government due notice, be willing to send a member of the Government to New Zealand to discuss preliminaries.

5. The proposals from the Government of New Zealand are, as they now stand, unacceptable to this Government on the following grounds:—

- (1.) They do not, in the opinion of this Government, present as between New Zealand and Fiji that mutuality of advantage which the Government of New Zealand supposes.
- (2.) This Government would not, as the proposals would seem to require, be inclined to enter into any arrangement with New Zealand that would in any way affect the unrestricted right of this colony to enter into similar arrangements with others of the Australasian Colonies so long as the terms offered by Fiji to those colonies were not more favourable than those given to New Zealand.
- (3.) They appear to require the imposition by this colony of high differential duties on many imports from Australia, although the amount of trade between Australia and Fiji is, in round numbers, about five times as great as the trade between New Zealand and Fiji.
- (4.) The adoption of such a principle by this Government would not unnaturally provoke a feeling of hostility with our present principal commercial connection, and would, moreover, upset and derange the fiscal system of this colony at a moment when it is but ill prepared to venture on any experimental course.

6. It will thus be understood that no treaty into which this Government may seek the sanction of the Imperial authorities to enter will involve an alteration of the tariff for the time being for the purpose of making it more restrictive to the commerce of other colonies or countries.

7. Until a Committee of the Legislative Council have examined and reported on the statistics of trade between the two colonies, this Government can only express its views on the subject of the proposed reciprocity treaty in a general manner.

Speaking broadly, however, this Government would in all probability be prepared to admit free of duty all farm, dairy, and agricultural produce, being the actual productions of New Zealand; fruits, fresh or preserved; its meats and fishes, frozen, salted, or tinned; its breadstuffs; its timber, rough or dressed. On the other hand, it would be expected that New Zealand should admit free of duty all articles exported thither from Fiji not now dutiable, together with maize and maizena, unmanufactured tobacco, and all fruits, fresh or preserved; and sugar, tea, and coffee at such a reduced rate on the then existing tariff of New Zealand as may be agreed to by the two Governments upon a mutual consideration of the whole subject.

I have, &c.,

WM. MCGREGOR,
 Colonial Secretary.

The Hon. the Commissioner of Trade and Customs, Wellington, New Zealand.

No. 12.

Messrs. MOSS, M.H.R., and SEED to the Hon. Sir J. VOGEL.

SIR,—

Auckland, 21st April, 1886.

In compliance with the request contained in your letters to us of the 23rd ultimo, we proceeded to Fiji by the "Arawata" on the 4th instant. Calling at the Bay of Islands on the following day to coal, we left Russell on Monday, the 5th, and, after a pleasant passage, reached Fiji on the evening of Friday, the 9th instant.

On the following morning we called at the Government offices, where we were most courteously received by the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Dr. Macgregor, who, after communicating with Government House, informed us that His Honour the Administrator in Council would receive us officially on Monday morning, at 10 o'clock. Later in the day we called at Government House to pay our respects, and in the course of conversation with His Honour the Administrator, Mr. J. B. Thurston, we furnished him with a copy of the proposals which formed the basis upon which we

were authorized to negotiate with the Fijian Government, so that he might have the opportunity of considering them before meeting us on the following Monday. At the appointed time we went to Government House, where we were met by His Honour Mr. Thurston, the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, and the Hon. the Attorney-General. The Rev. Mr. Shirley Baker, Premier of Tonga, who was a guest at Government House, was also present, and took part in the discussions which ensued.

From remarks which had been made to us by some gentlemen from Fiji whom we met in Auckland, as well as from what we gathered in various quarters, we could not be insensible to the fact that a very general impression prevailed in Fiji that our mission was intended to promote other objects than the increase of commercial intercourse between that colony and New Zealand. We therefore thought it right at once to inform the Government that we were accredited solely to them; and that our mission was undertaken only for the purpose of extending trade between the two countries. A communication we received from the Chamber of Commerce at Levuka on the day before we left Fiji (and of which we enclose a copy, together with a copy of our reply thereto) illustrates very clearly the impression referred to. We took occasion to explain to His Honour the Administrator the circumstances which led to our having been sent to Fiji without previous notice having been given. Satisfaction having been expressed with these explanations, Mr. Thurston then proceeded to lay before us his views and those of his Government. He stated that, whilst sincerely desirous to meet the wishes of the New Zealand Government for the reciprocal interchange of the products of the two countries on mutually advantageous terms, they could not see their way to adopt the proposals we had submitted—partly because those proposals would cause a loss of revenue which, in the present state of the finances of the colony, could ill be spared, but mainly because they appeared to preclude a similar treaty being entered into with any of the Australian Colonies.

In the hope that some fair understanding might be arrived at, we urged the advantages that, in our view, would accrue to Fiji from increased intercourse with New Zealand, and expressed our hope that the Fijian Government would continue the negotiations by making proposals in accordance with their views. We pointed out that the consumption of sugar in New Zealand was about twenty-five thousand tons per annum, being more than double the present production of that article in Fiji; and we showed that the market in New Zealand for Fijian produce would be a constantly expanding one, owing to the rapid increase of its population, which in 1871 was only 256,393, but at the end of last year had increased to 626,517.

As we laid great stress on the import of sugar into New Zealand, we were asked to note that, although they were anxious in every way to encourage that industry, the Fijian Government thought we overrated its importance, as they attached great weight to other productions by the smaller settlers, who formed the bulk of the population in Fiji.

We referred also to the advantages that now result from the running of the single steamer "Arawata," belonging to the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, which service is maintained by a subsidy paid by the New Zealand Government solely in the interests of trade.

It was readily conceded that the advantages to Fiji by increased intercourse with New Zealand would be very great, and His Honour the Administrator, being sincerely desirous of promoting that intercourse, promised to give further consideration to the subject, with a view of seeing whether some understanding might be arrived at as the basis on which a commercial treaty between the two countries might be arranged. It was accordingly settled that we should meet for a further conference on the following Thursday.

We should observe that Mr. Thurston pointed out that, just in the same way that no treaty could be definitely concluded on the part of New Zealand without the authority of the General Assembly, so no arrangement could be entered into by Fiji without the approval of the Home Government being first obtained. We gathered from him, however, that he did not anticipate any difficulty on this head if it could be shown that the proposed arrangement would be advantageous to the commerce of Fiji without unduly affecting the revenue from Customs or being prejudicial to the import of English manufactures.

On again meeting His Honour the Administrator he said that himself and Dr. Macgregor had in the interval given our representations, and the figures and statements with which we had supplied them, the best attention and consideration they could bestow during the short time at their disposal. He wished it to be distinctly understood that they were in every way as desirous as the Government of New Zealand could be to promote intercolonial reciprocity; and he might observe that correspondence was at that time going on with a neighbouring colony on the subject. Mr. Thurston further said that he desired to express his appreciation of the fair and reasonable manner in which the views we advanced had been expressed. He remarked also that the cause of the arrival of the delegates without previous intimation from the New Zealand Government had been fully explained to him; but that he could not help expressing his regret that such a course had been found inevitable, because if he had had notice he would not have prorogued the Legislative Council, as he had done only the day before our arrival, and he would then have been able to appoint a Committee of the Council to consider our proposals. Mr. Thurston concluded by saying that he should be prepared to enter into negotiations with the New Zealand Government for the reciprocal admission duty-free of a number of the products of the two colonies, which, we understood him to say in regard to those of New Zealand, would include many of our chief products, such as bacon and hams, cheese, butter, preserved meats, fish, flour, &c., &c.; and with regard to products at present liable to higher duties, he trusted that some arrangement might be arrived at whereby the exchange of these products in increasing quantities might be promoted without any great disturbance to the revenue of either Fiji or New Zealand. The views he had expressed orally to us would be duly communicated in writing in official form to the Government of New Zealand, and at the same time they would be informed of the willingness of the Fijian Government to send a delegate to New Zealand, at any time that would suit the convenience of the New Zealand Government, to discuss the terms and details of an arrangement such as he had described.

In concluding this report of our proceedings, we desire to express our warm acknowledgment of the courtesy with which we were received by His Honour the Administrator and the Government of Fiji. It is also due to the settlers that we should record the sympathy expressed by all whom we met with the objects of our mission, which has fairly broken ground, created a good understanding, and will, we trust, be found before long to bear good fruit.

We have, &c.,
F. J. MOSS, M.H.R.
WILLIAM SEED.

The Hon. Sir J. Vogel, K.C.M.G., &c., Wellington.

Enclosure 1.

The SECRETARY, Chamber of Commerce, Levuka, to Messrs. Moss, M.H.R., and SEED.

GENTLEMEN,—

Levuka, 15th April, 1886.

I have the honour, by direction of the Chamber, to express the regret of its members that they have been unable to meet you and discuss the important matter which forms the object of your visit to this colony.

Their regret is the greater inasmuch as the movement for closer political association with your colony, which, it may be fairly presumed, has not been without its influence in inducing the present action of your Government, had its origin in Levuka. It therefore follows that the colonists here resident take the keenest interest in any movement which would have the effect of drawing the two colonies closer together, either commercially or politically, and it is felt to be a special deprivation which has denied them free speech with you on these important matters.

It was hoped that your engagements would have permitted of your visiting Levuka by the "Arawata;" and the members of the Chamber, with the members of the Planters' Association and Annexation Committee, and many prominent citizens, agreeably anticipated the pleasure of meeting you at dinner and making your personal acquaintance.

As, however, circumstances did not permit of this, I am instructed to convey to you the general feeling of sympathy with your mission, and the desire to co-operate as far as may be possible in furthering the object you have in view. With this is also associated a warm feeling of personal regard and a deep sense of the public loss in being denied the profit and pleasure of closer communication.

Messrs. Moss and Seed,
Representatives of New Zealand in Fiji.

I have, &c.,
F. P. PRICHARD,
Secretary.

Enclosure 2.

Messrs. Moss, M.H.R., and SEED to the SECRETARY, Chamber of Commerce, Levuka.

SIR,—

Suva, 16th April, 1886.

We have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 15th, and to thank the Chamber of Commerce for the sympathy expressed therein with the object of the mission with which we have been charged by the Government of New Zealand. That mission, as you correctly surmised, was to encourage commercial intercourse between the Colonies of Fiji and New Zealand by mutual concessions in the Customs duties levied on the produce and manufactures of the respective colonies.

It would have given us great pleasure to have met your Chamber and to have its assistance, but the time at our disposal was so limited as to render a visit to Levuka impossible. The Chamber will, however, be glad to hear that we have received from His Honour the Administrator the most cordial reception, and an attentive consideration of our representations.

Coming as we did without previous intimation, we could not expect that any definite arrangement could be at once effected; but we leave with the knowledge that the Government of Fiji will give to the subject the fullest consideration, and with the hope that our mission may lead to a closer commercial connection between Fiji and New Zealand, and ultimately to the establishment of a wider system of reciprocity, embracing all the Australasian Colonies.

Thanking you for the kind personal feeling expressed in your letter, and regretting that the necessary shortness of our stay precluded our visiting Levuka.

We have, &c.,
F. J. MOSS, M.H.R.
WILLIAM SEED.

F. P. Prichard, Esq., Secretary, Chamber of Commerce, Levuka.

No. 13.

W. SEED, Esq., to the Hon. Sir JULIUS VOGEL.

SIR,—

Wellington, 26th April, 1886.

I do myself the honour to forward for your information the enclosed copy of a petition to His Honour the Administrator of the Government of Fiji, asking him to give favourable consideration to the proposals of the New Zealand Government for the establishment of a commercial treaty between Fiji and New Zealand. This document was appended to a letter from the Fiji correspondent of the *New Zealand Herald* which appeared in that paper on the 22nd instant. It furnishes strong evidence of the earnest desire of the European settlers at Fiji to see commercial intercourse between that colony and New Zealand promoted by every possible means.

The Hon. Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G., &c., Wellington.

I have, &c.,
WILLIAM SEED.

Enclosure.

To His Honour JOHN BATES THURSTON, C.M., Administrator of the Colony of Fiji, &c.

THE petition of the undersigned humbly sheweth:

1. That your petitioners are respectively merchants, planters, or traders carrying on business in this colony.
2. That your petitioners are aware that two special Commissioners are at present on a mission to the Government of this colony with a view to arrange, if possible, the basis of an agreement of reciprocity as regards the remission of duty on imports introduced from either colony to the other.
3. That your petitioners view such a proposal with great favour, as contemplated to advance the interests of all classes of the community in this colony.
4. That in the opinion of your petitioners such an opportunity for advancing the general welfare of the colony should not be lost.
5. That, though an absolute reciprocity may not be possible or practicable, that a remission might be arranged on articles of New Zealand production or manufacture imported into this colony.
6. That the loss to the revenue involved in such remission would be made up as far as possible by reduction in expenditure, or by a rearrangement of the incidence of taxation, the duty lost by remission on the articles of New Zealand production or manufacture being transferred to other articles not so produced or manufactured and used by same class of consumers.
7. That the articles of production favoured by the reciprocity arrangement should be made to contribute to the revenue a large percentage of the revenue lost and not otherwise made good.
8. That your petitioners are convinced that, were the New Zealand markets to admit even two or three articles of Fiji production free of duty, such as sugar, tea, and maize, that the effect upon these industries, and consequently upon the general state of the colony, would be most satisfactory; and your petitioners pray that your Honour will take into consideration the foregoing petition and give effect to your petitioners' prayer as far as possible; and your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

GEORGE MORGAN AND CO.,

E. W. FENNER,

Manager, New Zealand Sugar Works,
And fifty-five other *bonâ fide* merchants, traders, and
planters.

Levuka, 14th April, 1886.

No. 14.

The Hon. Sir JULIUS VOGEL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, &c., Fiji.

SIR,—

Government Buildings, Wellington, 1st May, 1886.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th April.

2. I shall be obliged by your conveying to His Honour the Officer Administering the Government of the Colony of Fiji my thanks for the courteous attention he gave to the representations of the delegates from New Zealand.

3. I am sorry that longer time was not afforded to His Honour to consider the proposals. It did not occur to me to send them in advance of the delegates.

4. I venture to think that had Fiji accepted the proposals its revenue would not have suffered, because some of its duties would have been increased; and, besides, its tariff is so slender that there would have been no difficulty in making up any deficiency by other or enlarged duties. But, in fact, such necessity would not have arisen, for the market which would have been open to Fijian products would have greatly advanced that colony. The Kingdom of Hawaii has progressed, I believe, remarkably under its treaty with the United States; its population has greatly increased, and its trade out and home amounts to about three millions sterling annually.

5. The contention that whatever arrangement is made by Fiji with New Zealand must be open to the other colonies stands, I fear, very much in the way of making such an arrangement as would be of service to Fiji.

6. His Honour asks for the admission of Fijian products into the other colonies at reduced duties in return for the admission of butter, hams, timber, &c., into Fiji. If he will calculate the value of the duties now chargeable in Fiji on the articles he will admit free, and the duties the colonies exact on the two Fijian products alone of sugar and tobacco, for which he seeks reduced duties, he will be able to realize that he is asking the colonies to make a great sacrifice.

7. One colony might make such a sacrifice—as New Zealand was, I think, prepared to do—in the hope of Fiji advancing to a position which would make its trade valuable, and give a return for the services rendered. But what His Honour asks is, that the colonies should make large sacrifices of revenue now leviable on Fijian products for no adequate return they would be assured of gaining.

8. I could have understood His Honour saying that he saw more advantage in making an arrangement with Victoria, and that he would prefer doing so. Queensland and New South Wales, being sugar-producing colonies, would not be inclined to make any arrangement such as New Zealand has proposed. Possibly Victoria might. I doubt it, because Victoria can procure sugar cheaper from Queensland, and making such an arrangement with Fiji might be regarded as unfriendly to Queensland.

9. It is different with New Zealand, which, from its position, is obviously destined to draw round it an island confederation, united by bonds of trade, and linked together by customs arrangements.

10. Even were Victoria disposed to make the same arrangement, I thought Fiji might prefer making it with New Zealand. The population of New Zealand, it is true, is not yet equal to that

of Victoria, but New Zealand has many interests in common with Fiji, and especially its proximity and friendship would be sure to promote a rapid increase in trade between the two countries.

11. The approaches already made to this colony showed the desire of the colonists of Fiji to come more closely into connection with New Zealand. The Government were anxious to respond to this desire, and saw in the common interests trade facilities would create the hope of closer future relations.

12. It need not be said that the Colonial Office and the Imperial Parliament do not share His Honour's view as to an exclusive treaty being inadmissible. "The Australian Colonies Duties Act, 1873," 36 Vict., cap. 22, recognized that two or more colonies might find it desirable to make special arrangements to which a "most favoured" colony clause might not apply.

13. I shall be very glad if His Honour will send delegates as he proposes. I have entered into the particulars above in the hope that the delegates will be gifted with powers to treat on a basis more enlarged than that your letter appears to indicate.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, &c., Fiji.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 15.

Hon. Sir JULIUS VOGEL to Rev. SHIRLEY W. BAKER.

SIR,—

Government Buildings, Wellington, 3rd May, 1886.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd ultimo, marked private and confidential, and to express my thanks to you for the information given therein as to the manner in which the proposals from the New Zealand Government for a reciprocity treaty with Fiji were received by the Government of that colony.

With regard to the concluding portion of your letter, it is only necessary for me to remind you of the understanding we came to, as detailed in my letter to you of the 11th February last, that it would only be desirable to proceed with the provisional arrangement we had discussed for a commercial treaty with Tonga if a treaty of the same kind was adopted by Fiji. As Fiji has not adopted the proposed treaty, matters will remain as they are in respect of Tonga at present; but I am hopeful that the time is not far distant when, with or without Fiji, we may be able to come to a commercial arrangement with you.

I take this opportunity of thanking you for the help you gave to the delegates whom you accompanied to Fiji, and of expressing my sense of the consideration which you have shown throughout the negotiations.

The Rev. Shirley W. Baker, Premier of Tonga, &c.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 16.

The Rev. S. W. BAKER to the Hon. Sir J. VOGEL.

SIR,—

Auckland, 17th May, 1886.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, No. 221/22, and to thank you for the same. I note your remark, "That, as Fiji has not adopted the proposed treaty, matters will remain as they are in respect of Tonga at present; but you are hopeful that the time is not far distant when, with or without Fiji, you may be able to come to a commercial arrangement with us."

I am also pleased to find that you approve of the course I pursued with reference to the action of the delegates on their mission to Fiji.

I have, &c.,

SHIRLEY W. BAKER,
Premier of Tonga.

Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G., Colonial Treasurer.

No. 17.

Hon. Sir JULIUS VOGEL to F. J. Moss, Esq., M.H.R., and W. SEED, Esq.

GENTLEMEN,—

Government Buildings, Wellington, 5th May, 1886.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your joint report, dated the 21st ultimo, detailing the result of your mission to the Government of Fiji with the view of promoting commercial intercourse between that colony and New Zealand.

In thanking you for the report which you have made, I am desirous of expressing my satisfaction that you were able to accomplish so much in the very short time at your disposal in Fiji, and also my appreciation of the judgment and ability with which you discharged the mission entrusted to you.

F. J. Moss, Esq., M.H.R., and W. Seed, Esq.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL.

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