

No. 3.

MEMORANDUM for His EXCELLENCY.

Premier's Office, Wellington, 18th March, 1891.

THE Premier has the honour to forward, for His Excellency's perusal, a further letter received from Sir William Fox on the subject of the action of Mr. Moss at Rarotonga.

J. BALLANCE.

Enclosure.

Sir W. Fox to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,—

Office of the New Zealand Alliance, Auckland, 12th March, 1891.

In continuation of my letter to yourself, dated the 5th current, in which I stated that the New Zealand Alliance could not acquiesce in your expression of regret that it had described Mr. Moss's action as unduly hasty and indiscreet, I beg your attention to the following remarks:—

Almost immediately after I had dispatched the above letter I received from Mr. Moss (to whom I am greatly obliged for his attention) a copy of the parliamentary paper A.—3, Sess. II., 1891, containing his reports to His Excellency the Governor, and other matters relating to his late visit to Rarotonga. I find, on careful perusal of these documents, that they add the most forcible evidence that the Alliance was perfectly justified in the view it took of Mr. Moss's action as "hasty and indiscreet." For, in the instructions given to him by His Excellency the Governor, he is not only limited to "inquiring and reporting" on the condition of affairs in Rarotonga, but he is most emphatically and repeatedly prohibited from taking any action whatever. In a telegram to Her Majesty's Secretary of State, dated the 27th October, 1890, His Excellency says of Mr. Moss's mission that he was "proceeding unofficially, reporting to me personally on return." In a letter to Queen Makea His Excellency says, "Mr. Moss will leave at once to visit Rarotonga in an unofficial capacity. He will report to me on his return, when he will receive instructions, and then return to take up his duties in Rarotonga." In a telegram to Mr. Moss, at the moment of his departure, His Excellency says, "You will please to understand that you have no authority to advise or act on behalf of Her Majesty, and that your visit is entirely unofficial, and that on your return you will report to me upon the state of affairs, &c., with especial reference to the importation of spirituous liquors, and the possibility of aiding the local authorities to put a stop to it." In a despatch to the Imperial Secretary for the Colonies His Excellency again says, "I have given Mr. Moss to clearly understand that in his present visit he is purely unofficial, and that he is not empowered in any way to act or advise on behalf of Her Majesty; and I have heard from Mr. Moss that he will be guided by those instructions." All this Mr. Moss was fully informed of, as he admits in one of his reports. "My instructions were only to inquire and to report. I was pressed on all sides not to return to New Zealand without advising at least what should be done; and, after careful consideration, came to the conclusion that I should not be justified in evading the responsibility of giving them all the assistance and moral support in my power;" in other words, of deliberately disobeying His Excellency's repeated instructions to do anything, not even to advise anything, till after my return to New Zealand, and further instructions from him. And then he immediately proceeded to convene a meeting of foreign residents, and invited them to elect one of their number to represent them in the Council, which they had no right to do, and he had none to advise; and he further proceeded to persuade the Council to revolutionise their constitutional law in its most important features, especially repealing the long-established prohibitory law against the sale of strong drink, and enacting a licensing law to legalise and regulate its sale, unprecedented, we believe, in any part of the world, and, as we think, extremely unlikely to have any beneficial effect.

Surely Mr. Moss's action would justify not only the use of our expression "hasty and indiscreet," but much stronger language, if we had thought proper to apply it.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. J. Ballance, Premier, &c.

WILLIAM FOX,
President of the New Zealand Alliance.

No. 4.

Mr. A. WILLIS to Sir W. Fox, Auckland.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 18th March, 1891.

I have been directed, by the Hon. the Premier, to acknowledge the receipt of your further letter of the 12th instant, relative to the action of Mr. F. J. Moss at Rarotonga, and to inform you that it has also been forwarded to His Excellency the Governor.

I have, &c.,

ALEX. WILLIS.

Sir W. Fox, K.C.M.G., President, New Zealand Alliance, Auckland.

No. 5.

The Hon. Mr. BUCKLEY to Sir W. Fox.

Premier's Office, Wellington, 27th May, 1891.

THE Premier has the honour to forward, for His Excellency's information, another letter from Sir William Fox, with enclosures, in reference to the liquor law at Rarotonga, and Mr. Moss's action in getting it passed.

P. A. BUCKLEY, for the Premier.