

No. 7.

(No. 29.)

SIR,—

Government House, Wellington, 11th July, 1895.

I have the honour to forward herewith for your information, at the request of my Government, some correspondence with my Premier with regard to a difference of opinion, as to the propriety of making four more calls to the Council, which has taken place between us.

You will observe, Sir, that my Ministers requested me to refer this difference to you for your decision, but that I was unable to agree to their proposals on the ground that the question was one of a local and not of an Imperial nature.

I must admit that on a former occasion I did so refer a similar case, but it was one of rather a complicated nature, which began during the tenure of office of my predecessor, and which I was requested by my Ministers to consider and decide on two days after my arrival in the colony. Had I had time properly to consider the subject, and to consult precedents, I would probably have taken the course I am now following; but the question had been open for some time, and Parliament was about to meet, I therefore yielded to the arguments of my Ministers to consider the matter without delay, took up the same position as my predecessor, and referred the matter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

My memoranda to the Premier, included in this correspondence, will, I trust, make clear to you the grounds on which I felt justified in declining to make these appointments; and you will observe that I expressed the opinion that, as long as the Upper Chamber is unlimited as to numbers, so long will there be a recurrence of similar differences of opinion.

Perhaps I may be allowed to add that as long as no such limit exists, while Ministers may or may not be influenced unconsciously or otherwise when advising appointments by other reasons than the welfare of the Upper Chamber, the Governor ought to have no other object than insuring that that branch of the Legislature shall suffer no detriment from unnecessary interference or from an undue number of appointments by any one party in the colony.

To show that my view is not an original one as to the advantages which would follow some limitation to the Council except on critical occasions, I beg to quote Lord Granville's despatch to Lord Belmore, Governor of New South Wales, 2nd October, 1869, in which he urges "the desirability of some constitutional understanding having in the public eye the form of a valuable though not inflexible precedent limiting the circumstances under which such creations or appointments can take place"; and he goes on to state that such an understanding did, in fact, exist between Sir John Young and his successive Ministers.

I may also add that more than one attempt has been made in this colony to arrive at some such arrangement, and proposals to that effect have been made in Parliament under former Ministries, but they have never come to any result.

With regard to the correspondence enclosed in Part I., the only pertinent memoranda are those which I have marked; in Part II., in No. 30, the last memorandum of the series, the Premier makes some assertions and comments which I cannot admit to be correct or agree with; but I did not wish to prolong the correspondence, which I now submit to you, and I hope in due time to have the honour of hearing from you that my action has your approval.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain,
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

GLASGOW.

(Enclosures.)

PART I.

MEMORANDUM for the PREMIER.

7th June, 1893.

IN forwarding the two accompanying despatches* for publication, the Governor thinks it right to state that they were not seen by the late Mr. Ballance.

GLASGOW.

* No. 7, of 17th February, 1893—Secretary of State to Lord Glasgow; and No. 60, of 3rd December, 1892—Lord Glasgow to Secretary of State.