

SESS. I.—1897.
NEW ZEALAND.

DESPATCH

FROM THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
INVITING THE PREMIERS OF THE AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES TO VISIT ENGLAND,
ACCOMPANIED BY DETACHMENTS OF THE LOCAL FORCES, ON THE OCCASION OF
THE CELEBRATION OF THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HER MAJESTY'S REIGN,
AND TELEGRAMS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.

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

No. 1.

(Telegram.)

(Received 27th January, 1897.)

Governor, Wellington, New Zealand.

THERE will be great public commemoration sixtieth anniversary Queen's accession, at which representatives of foreign nations will be present.

Her Majesty the Queen has approved of my suggestion that head of each self-governing colony should also be invited to take part in this unique demonstration.

I have accordingly to request you will be good enough to convey to the Premier the invitation of Her Majesty's Government to visit England in June, and to be their guest during his stay in this country, and their hope that he may be accompanied by his wife.

Should this invitation be accepted, the presence of the Premier would afford a valuable opportunity of maintenance of communications with discussions on many questions of the greatest Imperial interest. They are hoping that the colonies may also desire that their military forces should be represented on this occasion, together with those of the Crown colonies, who will be sending detachments in this case.

I request you, after consulting with your Ministers, to suggest the numbers, which should not be large, and the composition of the contingent. Cavalry will be best, and, if necessary, horses can be lent in this country and barrack-accommodation provided. Her Majesty the Queen has graciously promised to receive the Premiers and to inspect the troops.

Despatch follows by mail. Date of celebration will be telegraphed when announced.

(London, 25th.)

CHAMBERLAIN.

No. 2.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 28th January, 1897.

You are aware that the present year will witness the sixtieth anniversary of the accession to the throne of the reigning sovereign, an event altogether unprecedented in the history of the British Empire.

2. The event is unique, and its importance so great that it would in any case merit and receive exceptional commemoration. But Her Majesty Queen Victoria has in a remarkable manner endeared herself to all her subjects throughout the world; and I feel sure that in her colonial possessions, which are more specially under my charge, there is no one who would not, when the day comes, wish to feel that he is sharing, however remotely, in the tributes of joyful affection with which she will be acclaimed here in England. It appears

to me that there could be no better way of assisting in this object than by securing some representation of Her Majesty's Colonial Empire as a whole as a testimony to all nations of the loyalty and affection which Her Majesty has through her long and beneficent reign implanted in the hearts of the varied populations which have the privilege of being Her Majesty's subjects.

3. It is therefore with much satisfaction that I am able to inform you that Her Majesty has been pleased to approve of a public celebration of her sixtieth anniversary being held on the 22nd of June next, and that I have submitted to her, and she has graciously signified her approval of, a proposal that her great colonies should be represented at this ceremony by their leading statesmen, and by detachments of their local military forces.

4. I have accordingly, in my telegraphic despatch of the 25th instant, requested you to convey to the Premier of New Zealand an invitation on the part of Her Majesty's Government to visit this country in June next, and to be their guest during his stay in England, and have intimated that it will be an additional satisfaction to them if Mr. Seddon should be accompanied by Mrs. Seddon, or by some other lady member of his family.

5. As regards a representation of the local military forces, I should prefer, as I have informed you by telegraph, to leave it to yourself and your advisers to suggest the strength and composition of the detachment. It will be readily understood, however, that in any pageant or procession of such a nature as is contemplated cavalry may be expected to show to greater advantage than infantry, and your Government may therefore prefer that the colony should be represented by mounted men. But in this case it would not be indispensable for them to bring their own horses, as these could be provided without difficulty in this country. I may add that, although, as I have informed you in my telegram, Her Majesty's Government do not propose to defray the expenses of the military contingents, they will be glad to do all in their power to assist by providing barrack-accommodation for the men, and in making their visit to England a pleasant one.

6. Should it be found practicable to carry out this idea, as I hope may be the case, the great self-governing colonies of Her Majesty's Empire would be appropriately represented by their Premiers, who would be accompanied on any special ceremonial occasion by an escort or guard of honour consisting of a detachment of the local forces; and I have no doubt that such a demonstration would do honour to the colony and be highly appreciated in this country.

7. Her Majesty has also been pleased to signify her willingness to receive the colonial Premiers, and to witness a march-past of the colonial troops.

8. Should this invitation be accepted by the Premiers of the self-governing colonies, their presence in London would afford a most valuable opportunity for the discussion of many subjects of the greatest interest to the Empire, such as commercial union, colonial defence, representation of the colonies, legislation with regard to immigrants from Asia and elsewhere, and other similar subjects.

9. It is not anticipated that the duration of the actual ceremonies in connection with the celebration will extend beyond a week; but I am disposed to think that some four or five weeks might be profitably employed, not only in the discussion of the subjects I have mentioned, but in connection with other objects for the advancement of the interests of Her Majesty's Colonial Empire, and, should Mr. Seddon find it in his power to remain so long in this country, Her Majesty's Government trust that he will allow them to consider him as their guest during this period.

10. I will only add, in conclusion, the expression of my hope that the idea I have thus sketched out may be realised, and that the forthcoming celebration may be marked by such a representative demonstration on the part of Her Majesty's Colonial Empire as has never before been witnessed in this country.

11. I may add that I am in communication with the various Crown colonies as to their representation by detachments of their military forces.

I have, &c.,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

Governor the Right Hon. the Earl of Glasgow, G.C.M.G., &c.

No. 3.

CABLEGRAM from SECRETARY of STATE, Colonial Office.

7th February, 1879.

CELEBRATION of Queen's reign : Premiers will be in time if arriving not later than 21st June. Colonial troops must arrive earlier.

No. 4.

TELEGRAM received from SECRETARY of STATE, Colonial Office.

14th February, 1897.

REFERRING to my telegram of 25th July, committee of Royal Military Tournament, 27th May to 10th June, arranging special displays and prizes for colonial forces ; also National Rifle Association offer special prizes, Bisley, 12th July to 24th July (May ?), and that proposed visit of Premiers excites greatest interest in this country. If able to accept invitation arrangements will be made for visiting chief towns and places of interest.

MINUTE.

His Excellency the Administrator.

THE Premier notes the contents of the telegram from the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and begs to inform His Excellency that the matter is receiving the earnest attention of the Government.

16th February, 1897.

JOHN MACKENZIE,
Acting-Premier.

No. 5.

CABLEGRAM from SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES.

16th March.

CELEBRATION of Queen's reign : Barracks, rations, horses provided free.

No. 6.

CABLEGRAM from SECRETARY of STATE to ADMINISTRATOR of the GOVERNMENT.

21st March, 1897.

I HOPE I may shortly hear that the Premier can accept the invitation to the celebration of the Queen's record reign, and, as I am anxious to make arrangements for the Premiers during their visit, it would be convenient to know when he may be expected. Nine of the colonies have already accepted the invitation with thanks.

MINUTE BY THE PREMIER.

His Excellency the Administrator.

VERY much regret that I am as yet unable to reply in the affirmative to the invitation. Will His Excellency be good enough to inform the Secretary of State accordingly?

25th March, 1897.

R. J. SEDDON.

No. 7.

CABLEGRAM to the SECRETARY of STATE from ADMINISTRATOR of the GOVERNMENT.

27th March, 1897.

IN answer to your telegram of 21st March, Premier regrets that cannot yet accept in the affirmative the invitation.

No. 8.

CABLEGRAM from SECRETARY of STATE to ADMINISTRATOR of the GOVERNMENT.

31st March, 1897.

REFERRING to your telegram of 27th March, regret invitation not answered in affirmative, but hope decision not final.

