

1903.

NEW ZEALAND.

THE PREMIER'S VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA

AND THE REPRESENTATION OF NEW ZEALAND AT THE CORONATION OF HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII. AND THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES AND THE PRIME MINISTERS OF THE SELF-GOVERNING COLONIES, JUNE TO AUGUST, 1902.

Laid on the Table of both Houses by Leave.

It will be recollected that last year New Zealand received an invitation from His Majesty's Government to be represented at the coronation of His Gracious Majesty King Edward VII., and also that the Prime Minister should attend in London a Conference of Premiers of the great self-governing colonies of the Empire with the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In compliance with that invitation I proceeded to the Mother-country as the representative of the colony at the coronation and the Colonial Conference, and in view of the great importance of the occasion as an epoch-marking event in the history of our Empire, I deem it right to put on record, and for the information of honourable members, the subjoined memorandum, giving briefly a summarised account of my commission.

R. J. SEDDON.

Wellington, 14th July, 1903.

MEMORANDUM.

In response to several invitations to visit South Africa, including one from General Lord Kitchener, commanding the British forces, the Premier determined to go Home by that route. More particularly was he induced to avail himself of the opportunity of visiting South Africa in view of the prominent part New Zealand had taken in connection with the Boer war. He felt that it would enable him to gain at first hand much valuable information that would prove of utility both in regard to his mission in England and to the colony generally.

Accordingly, the Premier left New Zealand on the 14th April, 1902, and landed at Durban on the 17th May. He was there met by General Lyttelton, representing Lord Kitchener, by General Baden Powell, and by the Mayor and burgesses of the city. The following addresses were presented, and the Premier, believing these were more as a tribute to the colony than to himself personally, deems it advisable to give the same in this memorandum:—

To the Right Honourable RICHARD JOHN SEDDON, P.C., LL.D., Premier of New Zealand.

SIR,—

On behalf of the burgesses of Durban we beg to accord to you and Mrs. Seddon a hearty welcome to this borough.

We desire to express to you, as representing loyal New Zealand, our high appreciation of the brilliant services rendered by your fellow-colonists in the cause of freedom in South Africa, the splendid exhibition of loyalty thus displayed having strengthened the bonds that unite us as children of the same great Mother-country.

We rejoice that our commercial relations with you have largely increased, and we trust that socially, commercially, and politically Natal and New Zealand may become more and more intimately connected, to our mutual advantage.

We regret that your stay in Durban must be so short, and desire to take this opportunity of voicing the strong feeling of admiration entertained by all classes of our community for the patriotic services you have rendered to the Empire, and trust you may long be spared to continue this good work.

We heartily wish you a pleasant visit to the Home-land, where a grateful people will be rejoiced to welcome one who has done so much for the British Empire, that you may have a profitable intercourse with the other Premiers of the Empire, and that Mrs. Seddon and yourself may return in safety to your home in New Zealand.

ERNEST E. ACCUTT, Mayor.

On behalf of the Town Council and Burgesses of Durban,

Town House, Durban, 14th May, 1902.

G. GOOLES, Town Clerk.