

SESS. II.—1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE STEAMER "HINEMOA."

(PAPERS RELATING TO THE REFUSAL TO GRANT THE USE OF THE "HINEMOA" TO CONVEY THE MARQUIS OF NORMANBY, HIS FAMILY, ETC., TO VICTORIA.)

In reply to Address of the House, 19th November, 1879.

No. 1.

The PREMIER to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

Memorandum for His Excellency.

SIR GEORGE GREY presents his respectful compliments to the Marquis of Normanby.

Sir George Grey understands that, at the meeting of the Executive Council this day, the Marquis of Normanby caused to be read out to the Council a minute, which had been entered upon the proceedings of Council, regarding a conversation which had passed at the meeting of Council on the 14th instant, and which, in Sir George Grey's belief, formed no part of the proceedings of the Council, as it took place before the minutes of the last proceedings were read and confirmed; but, as the Governor has thought it necessary to enter upon the minutes of the Council his view of the matter, Sir George Grey now transmits a paper which he dictated on the 14th instant, immediately after his return from the Council, with the intention of transmitting it to the Governor, but which, upon second thoughts, he withheld, intending to destroy it, not wishing to embarrass in any way the Governor, who is about to leave the colony. He now, however, transmits it to the Governor, as he thinks it right this paper should remain on record, His Excellency having placed on the minutes of the Executive Council a minute recording his recollection of what took place on the 14th instant.

Wellington, 21st January, 1879.

G. GREY.

Enclosure.

IN reference to what passed in the Executive Council this morning, with regard to the "Hinemoa," Sir George Grey thinks it right to make the following observations:—

2. When he recently returned to Wellington, he found that His Excellency had stated to Ministers that he desired, if possible, that the "Hinemoa" should take him to Melbourne, the Governor paying (Sir George Grey presumes out of the sum allowed by the Home Government for his passage) for the cost of coal, and that the vessel should then proceed to Sydney and convey Sir Hercules Robinson from Sydney to Wellington, as the new Governor of New Zealand.

3. Sir George Grey understood that the question was an open one, and did not know that any opinion had been expressed to the Governor by Ministers upon the subject, although he knew they were all anxious the Governor should have the vessel if possible. He asked for any written communication from the Governor regarding it, and was told there was none. He therefore presumed that the matter might be dealt with verbally, if Sir George Grey desired that it should be so treated.

4. Sir George Grey expressed the following views to Ministers upon the subject: He stated that the "Hinemoa" was especially intended for service on the coasts of New Zealand: to convey troops or assistance to any point if a sudden disturbance should unfortunately take place; to afford assistance to settlers at any point if an alarm occurred, such as unfortunately takes place in New Zealand from time to time; and for services of a like nature: and that upon the whole he was inclined to think that the Government ought not to set the example of sending the "Hinemoa" for any period of time from the colony. That in New Zealand, as has happened, a lunatic (for they never confine their lunatics) has committed a terrible murder and created great alarm in a remote district; that on other occasions men of violent passions have done the same thing; whilst, from any cause of this kind, at any unexpected moment, a temporary disturbance might take place which could easily be stopped by immediate action, but which, if a vessel was not readily available, might grow into a very serious affair.

5. For these reasons Sir George Grey felt that, if an event of the kind he has alluded to took place, he might be justly and severely blamed, and would himself feel that he was culpable, and had not done his duty to Her Majesty's subjects, by running the risk of allowing the "Hinemoa" to leave the Colony of New Zealand; and for this cause he felt unwilling to allow the vessel to go to Melbourne and subsequently to Sydney.