

public inconvenience would result from carrying out what had been proposed: it being understood that, so soon as His Excellency had left the colony, the dormant Commission addressed to the Chief Justice would come into force, and the Chief Justice be at once sworn as Administrator of the Government.

6. That opinion was only expressed because Ministers were aware that the Administrator would have all the powers of the Governor: that there would, in point of fact, be in New Zealand a Government competent for every purpose under the Constitution Act, and the Royal Commission and Instructions. On the 8th September, the Premier, replying in the House of Representatives to a question respecting the Governor's then intended departure, gave the assurance that such arrangements had been made that there would be no inconvenience whatever in the transaction of public business. On the 9th September, when question was raised in the House as to the scope of the dormant Commission, the Premier repeated this assurance, in effect, and denied that the Parliament or the colony would be called upon to make any sacrifice because of the Governor's departure. If Ministers had believed that there could be any suspension or interruption of the ordinary functions of Her Majesty's Representative, they would have been unable to advise that His Excellency's departure could take place without serious inconvenience.

7. With respect to the increase of the Armed Constabulary, it was the will of Parliament that this Force on the West Coast should be strengthened. The House of Representatives not only increased the vote for the Force, as recommended by the Government, but, so far as opinion was expressed in the House, it unanimously favoured a prompt and effective addition to the Constabulary. Even now, however, the strength of the Force barely exceeds what it was two years ago, under the Government of Sir George Grey.

8. Ministers must respectfully but firmly demur to His Excellency's proposition that, because the Administrator's tenure of office was temporary, such acts as the issue of the Proclamation, the acceptance of the resignation of a Minister of a particular office, and the appointment of a new Minister thereto, ought to have been delayed. The public business of the colony was carried on under the Administrator precisely as it would have been under the Governor; and Ministers are solely responsible to Sir James Prendergast for what they have done and advised during his tenure of office. This course was, Ministers respectfully submit, in accordance with the terms and the intention of Her Majesty's Commission to the Chief Justice of the colony, as well as in accordance with the understanding with His Excellency prior to his departure.

See A.—8B, 1882.

9. The reasons which satisfied the Administrator of the Government that it was necessary and right on his part to sign the Proclamation of the 19th instant, are set forth in a memorandum bearing that date. The document is, no doubt, in the office at Government House; but, for His Excellency's greater convenience, a copy of it is attached hereto. Whether, under the circumstances, the action of the Executive was unusual, Ministers will not argue: they content themselves with stating their inability to concur with his Excellency's remarks on that subject.

10. In conclusion, Ministers desire to state that they had not received information that His Excellency's return within twenty-four hours, or any definite period, was probable, or that any communication whatever from His Excellency had reached the colony after his departure from Auckland: nor could they suppose that His Excellency would have been reluctant to assent to measures which, in their opinion, had become necessary for maintaining the peace of the colony, and protecting the lives and properties of Her Majesty's subjects.

Wellington, October 21st, 1881.

JOHN HALL.

No. 3.

His Excellency Sir A. H. GORDON to the PREMIER.

THE Governor would wish to be informed with what instructions Mr. Bryce has been furnished for his action on the West Coast, and what powers he possesses of acting without reference to Wellington.

The Governor would also wish to be informed what instructions have been given to Colonel Roberts.

In the present highly critical state of affairs, His Excellency also desires to be informed, daily, of all important official communications sent to, or received from, Mr. Bryce or Colonel Roberts.

21st October, 1881.

A. H. G.

No. 4.

The PREMIER to His Excellency Sir A. H. GORDON.

THE Premier has the honor to reply as follows to the memorandum handed to him yesterday by His Excellency the Governor:—

1. It has not been considered necessary to furnish written instructions to Mr. Bryce. He has discussed the whole situation with the Cabinet; and, as the Minister to whom it specially belongs to deal with the question now at issue on the West Coast, a large amount of discretion must necessarily be vested in him. Generally, before taking any important step, Mr. Bryce will communicate with the Premier; but where special circumstances, or sudden emergency, render immediate action necessary, Mr. Bryce will act on his own responsibility.

2. The general instructions under which Colonel Roberts is acting will be gathered from the memorandum already in course of preparation for His Excellency. Colonel Roberts's standing instructions are, that he is first to warn any Natives who are committing illegal trespass, or otherwise breaking the provisions of the West Coast Settlement Act; and—should they persist after fair warning—when convenient opportunity presents itself, he is to arrest the offenders. At present, prudential reasons prevent any active steps being taken. Mr. Hursthouse is daily giving warnings against breaches of the law. Colonel Roberts receives instructions upon particular cases as they arise.