

introduced at the time mentioned in the question the proposed amendments would have been embodied. The draft Bill, with the amendments, will be sent for the consideration of the colonial Governments either this week or the next, and I hope to be able to lay without delay on the table of the House the circular despatch showing the amendments to be inserted.

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No. 50.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 12th December, 1884.

I transmit to you herewith copy of a letter I have received from the Colonial Office, enclosing a circular despatch from Lord Derby to the Governors of the Australasian Colonies, with the amendments proposed by Her Majesty's Government in the Federal Council Bill.

You will observe that there are not many of these amendments which are important. I should have liked to see a permissive clause, allowing New Zealand to carry out her traditional idea of a federation with Fiji, Samoa, and the Friendly Isles; but Lord Derby's wish has been to adhere as closely as possible to the lines laid down by the Sydney Convention. I do not, however, anticipate that, if the colonies would agree to the insertion of such a clause, there would be any difficulty in the way of adding it during the passage of the Bill through the Imperial Parliament.

I was able to send you, two nights ago, a cablegram, copy of which is annexed, giving you information of the chief amendments proposed in the Bill.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

P.S.—I herewith also enclose copy of joint cablegram which has been sent to South Australia for circulation amongst the Australasian Governments.

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Enclosure 1.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 11th December, 1884.

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you six copies of a despatch which his Lordship will address by to-morrow's mail to the Governors of the Australasian Colonies respecting the proposed Bill for constituting a Federal Council of Australasia.

I am also to enclose six copies of the Bill, showing the amendments proposed by Her Majesty's Government and referred to in the despatch, and to suggest that, if the Agents-General intend to communicate the substance of the proposed amendments to their Governments by telegraph, it may prevent mistake if they do so in the same terms.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

JOHN BRAMSTON.

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Enclosure 2.

COPY of TELEGRAM forwarded by the AGENT-GENERAL for SOUTH AUSTRALIA to the GOVERNMENT of SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

JOINT telegram from the Agents-General for all the Australasian Colonies: A revised draft of the Federal Council Enabling Bill has been posted this afternoon. The Colonial Office seems to expect the Agents-General to telegraph a summary. I am waiting for instructions. Circulate the above amongst the Governments of the Australian Colonies, New Zealand, and Tasmania.

12th December, 1884.

ARTHUR BLYTH.

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No. 51.

The PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 19th December, 1884.

I have the honour to inform you that your letters of the 17th, 24th, and 25th October, relating to the confederation and intercolonial question, have been considered by the Premier and other Ministers.

2. The memorandum written by me, and which was sent by His Excellency the Governor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, embodies the views of the Government; and the *Hansard* report of the debates in Parliament will inform you as to the general feeling of the Legislature on the subject.

3. Your telegram stating how the Imperial Government propose to modify the Federal Council Bill prepared by the recent Intercolonial Convention has been received; but, until fuller information on the subject reaches us, we shall forbear to comment upon it.

4. We trust that you will continue your efforts to secure that the French Government shall drop the Récidiviste Bill; and we would suggest that you might press the point that, even from a French point of view, such a measure would be injurious, as almost certainly tending to destroy New Caledonia's prospects of becoming a flourishing colony.

5. Respecting Sir George Grey's Annexation and Confederation Bill of 1883, the Government still desire to see it assented to.

6. We hope that you will be enabled, by continued exercise of the ability you have hitherto shown, to induce the Agents-General to co-operate cordially on all colonial questions.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL,

(in the absence of Premier.)

Sir F. Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General, &c.

A.-2, No. 31.

A.-2, No. 31.

A.-1, No. 13.