

1888.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE CHINESE QUESTION

(CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING, AND MINUTES OF CONFERENCE ON).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 17th May, 1888.

Ordered, "That there be laid before this House copies of all papers and correspondence that has passed, on the Chinese question, between the Government of New Zealand and the Governments of Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland."—(Mr. SEDDON.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

No. 1.

Sir H. PARKES to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, 8th November, 1887.

I have the honour to invite your consideration to the expediency of new legislation in relation to the Chinese, and I enclose copies of correspondence which has already taken place between this Government and the Government of Victoria on the subject.

2. I do not myself join with those who are ever railing against the degraded character of the Chinese. It is on very different grounds that I consider their settlement in large numbers in the Australasian Colonies open to grave objection. For the soundest of political and social reasons it is inadvisable and fraught with serious evils to allow sharply-defined class distinctions to grow up in these colonies, where the common elements of success, industry, good conduct, and perseverance should leave the race of emulation open to all alike. I hold it to be a question of policy of the first magnitude to cement society together in Australia by the same principles of faith and jurisprudence, the same influences of language and learning, and the same national habits of daily life.

3. I shall be glad if you will inform me of the views of your Government on the general question, and of the provisions which you consider should be embodied in any new measure of restriction.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington, New Zealand.

HENRY PARKES.

Enclosures.

COPY of TELEGRAM from the Hon. DUNCAN GILLIES, M.P., Victoria, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, Sydney, dated the 2nd November, 1887.

Do you purpose to legislate on Chinese question this session; if so, can we come to an understanding on the subject as to proposals?

Sir H. PARKES to the Hon. D. GILLIES, M.P., Victoria.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, 4th November, 1887.

In reference to the question of the settlement of Chinese in Australasia in its whole bearing upon the national development and permanent welfare of these communities, I have the honour to state for your information that, in the opinion of this Government, it would be a great advantage if all the colonies could agree upon a measure of restriction, or, perhaps, more correctly speaking, of practical prohibition, which should be framed in the same terms and impose the same conditions. Although in the vast extent of Australian territory questions of climate and of the suitability of the soil for special industries must necessarily raise difficulties in the application of labour to productive capabilities, much greater in some parts than in others, still the main subject cannot, I apprehend, be safely put aside by any Australian Government; and it seems to me that it can hardly be considered with satisfactory results except in view of the better qualities rather than the worst characteristics of the Chinese, their self-denial, plodding industry, persistency of purpose, and powers of imitation; and these striking individual qualities, again, in the light of the enormous numbers of the Chinese nation—their 400,000,000 to our less than 4,000,000 of souls.

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