

FRIDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER, 1892.

Present: Mr. T. Thompson (Chairman), Mr. Joyce, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Harkness.
The following petition was further considered:—
No. 126.—Hon. Sir Julius Vogel. Adjourned from 21st September.
Consideration adjourned.

MONDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER, 1892.

Present: Mr. T. Thompson (Chairman), Mr. Wright, Mr. Harkness, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Buckland, Mr. Joyce.

The following petition was further considered:—

No. 126.—Hon. Sir Julius Vogel. Adjourned from 23rd September, 1892.

Mr. Dawson moved, "That, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony."

Mr. Joyce moved, by way of amendment, "That, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration."

Upon the amendment being put, the names were taken down as follows:—

Ayes, 1—Mr. Joyce.

Noes, 4—Mr. Harkness, Mr. Buckland, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Dawson.

Amendment negatived.

The original question was then put, and the names taken down as follows:—

Ayes, 4—Mr. Harkness, Mr. Buckland, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Dawson.

Noes, 1—Mr. Joyce.

So it passed in the affirmative.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

FRIDAY, 16TH SEPTEMBER, 1892.—(MR. T. THOMPSON, Chairman.)

Mr. HARRY B. VOGEL appeared as agent for the petitioner.

The Chairman: What course do you propose to take in connection with this matter?

Mr. Vogel: I have no evidence to call; I have simply to ask that the evidence now printed, taken before a Select Committee in the session of 1885, may be considered by this Committee.

The Chairman: What you wish the Committee to do, is to take the evidence as given before the Committee in 1885 as if it were given to-day?

Mr. Vogel: Yes; and allow me to go over it carefully, and explain the matter to you. I shall endeavour to be as brief as I possibly can. The petition itself puts forward almost the whole tale as succinctly as I could possibly place it before you. The petition sets forth that Sir Julius Vogel was, in 1879, Agent-General for New Zealand. He was also a director of the New Zealand Agricultural Company, and, in his evidence, he states that he became so, as he thought, with the approval of the members of the then Government; in other words, he did not know that he was doing anything wrong. Moreover, he had a precedent, to a certain extent, in the late Dr. Featherston, who was a director of the National Bank at the same time as he was Agent-General. However, whether by mistake or otherwise, he (Sir Julius) became a director of the New Zealand Agricultural Company, and he wrote a formal letter (page 3 of I.—1A., 1885) to the Minister for Immigration, giving notice of what he had done. He received a reply. The Government at once took up an opposite position: both the Government of Sir George Grey, which happened then to be in office, and the Government of Sir John Hall, which succeeded him, took up an opposite view to Sir Julius, and said it was incompatible with the business of Agent-General that he should be a director of this company. And then there succeeded a series of cablegrams that, unfortunately, in their brevity, were misleading, to a certain extent, to both parties. As need hardly be pointed out, there is extreme difficulty by telegram in really expressing what is meant, and, in trying to be brief, one is very often apt to imagine that the person receiving the telegram will interpret it in the spirit in which it is sent. In these cablegrams that passed between Sir George Grey, and subsequently Sir John Hall, and Sir Julius Vogel, it came to this, that both of them were somewhat at cross purposes. On the 17th June, 1879, Sir Julius Vogel wrote a letter with reference to the directorship, asking time for reconsideration of the decision that he was not to join the directorship, and the Government sent the following cablegram; and it is really on this cablegram and the four that followed that the whole point rests:—

Vogel, London.

GOVERNMENT considered letter June seventeen. Still holds former opinion. Now requests you resign office director Agricultural Company at once. Reply "Yes" or "No" by telegram. Government cannot allow Agent-General to take any part in politics at Home or in any private business.—GREY.

On the 9th October Sir Julius Vogel replied,—

Premier, New Zealand.

SOME members Government knew I was assisting organize company, and I find shareholders would not think it fair of me to resign for some time to come.—VOGEL, London, 8.

On the 3rd November the following telegram was received from Sir John Hall, who had taken the place of Sir George Grey as Premier,—

Vogel, London.

WIRE names late Government knew assisting organize company, because statement respecting this knowledge reasonable time be allowed you arrange retire. Present Government agree inexpedient you remain director or engage Home politics.—HALL.