

what the Government thought fit to remit, and not on what passed between Mr. Jellicoe and myself.

You passed to me in Court a slip saying, as far as I can remember, that the penalty would be reduced to £200, and I think, but am not sure, that I passed the slip on in Court to Mr. Jellicoe. If I did not pass it on, I then and there read it to him.

It was upon that slip, and what was there written, that I suppose the £200 was paid in.

It is difficult to say what one would have done, speaking at this date, but I think that I should never have recommended a remission of the costs.

Yours truly,

H. D. BELL.

W. T. Glasgow, Esq., Customs Office, Government Buildings.

SIR,—

Department of Trade and Customs, Wellington, 9th May, 1889.

Adverting to your letter of yesterday's date, I am directed by the Hon. the Premier to say that no record of the promises to which reference is made in your previous letter can be found, and that Mr. Fisher did not communicate it to any one in the department. The Premier would therefore be glad if you would give particulars stating when it was made, and whether verbally or otherwise.

I have, &c.,

W. T. GLASGOW,

(For Secretary.)

E. G. Jellicoe, Esq., Wellington.

SIR,—

Panama Street, Wellington, 18th May, 1889.

I enclose you copy of a letter which I find I wrote on the 1st March to Mr. Jellicoe, with regard to the remission of the penalties and forfeiture against Hamilton.

You will see that in this letter I do not refer to the costs. I was unaware, when I wrote you my last letter, that this letter had been written. It was written apparently by my direction, not signed by myself, but by my clerk on my behalf, but no doubt dictated by me to my shorthand writer.

I think it quite bears out what I have already said—viz., that the matter which was raised between Mr. Jellicoe and myself, and the communications which passed between him and me, such as they were, related only to the question of the penalty and forfeiture.

I have, &c.,

H. D. BELL,

Crown Solicitor.

The Secretary for Customs, Wellington.

(Enclosure.)

Panama Street, Wellington, 1st March, 1889.

DEAR SIR,—

*Customs v. Hamilton.*

I am directed by the Hon. the Commissioner of Customs to inform you that if Mr. Hamilton pays £200 he will advise His Excellency to remit the remaining penalties and the forfeiture involved in the conviction.

Please let me know at your earliest convenience when the £200 will be paid into Court.

Yours truly,

H. D. BELL,

(p. F.E.P.)

Crown Solicitor.

E. G. Jellicoe, Esq., Wellington.

The Hon. the Premier,

Wellington, 31st May, 1889.

ON the 11th April—more than a month and a half past—in a letter addressed by you to the Wellington *Evening Post*, you informed the people of the colony that all the facts connected with my retirement from the Ministry should be made public as soon as possible. These were your words: "The Government desire that all the facts connected with Mr. Fisher's retirement should be made public as soon as possible. The official correspondence upon the subject which is necessary to elicit the facts fully has, however, not yet closed."

I am not, of course, in a position to say with whom, or with how many persons the correspondence was being conducted; but so far as concerns myself it was closed on the 12th April, when I informed you that your ungenerous conduct rendered it impossible for me to hold any further communication with you upon any subject.

My intention was to await the publication of your views, in accordance with your public statement that they should be published, and then to answer them publicly; but a change of tactics has resulted in the abandonment of your intention to make public your answer, and instead I have received from you a letter of an extraordinary character, dated 23rd April, 1889, which I am led to believe you decline to publish except under the protection of parliamentary privilege. That letter I now propose to answer by writing to you, as you have by your altered tactics debarred me from any other opportunity of refuting the statements it contains, or of explaining any of the circumstances to which it refers.

Before criticizing the letter, however, I desire to call attention not only to your change of tactics, but to your change of tone. This letter of the 23rd April charges me with deception and dishonour, and assails me generally in a wanton and unfeeling manner. The letter is really a very serious letter; but your correspondence, with all its seriousness, is somewhat comic. For example, the deception and dishonour which existed on the 23rd April, if they existed at all, must have existed