

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDANCE

THE GOVERNOR AND THE FOREIGNERS

To the Editor of the Argus.

Sir,—

The rumours which are in circulation about the partiality of the Governor towards the Americans implicated in the late outbreak have assumed a shape so definite that it is high time for the press, if not the Governor himself, to take notice of them. British citizens naturally ask Why is so much severity used towards them, and so much clemency towards the Americans? Does it proceed from fear on the part of the Governor or from his accessibility to the flatteries of a few smooth-tongued Yankees? For several weeks I have heard this subject freely talked of in every circle which I have visited. At first I treated it as one of the flying rumours to which excitement gives birth; but now I am inclined to think that there is something in it.

The following cases of partiality have been specifically referred to, and it is time that they should be altered:— 1. ----- imprisoned at Geelong for sly-grog-selling; pardoned by the Governor avowedly as an inducement to the Americans at Ballarat to keep quiet during the agitation. This case was made public by the Governor himself in a way which suggested very painful reflections in the minds of many as to his Excellency's boasted 'honesty' and good sense.

2. ----- arrested, along with Fletcher, McIntyre, and Westerby, for setting fire to Bentley's Hotel, and with them committed for trial. It was remarked, however, that he was not tried, and, on inquiry, it was found he was an American. For this case the Attorney-General may be held responsible.

3. Was caught fighting in the Eureka Stockade, and carried to the Camp, fled the command of a company, and held the rank of sergeant. Was engaged in drilling the diggers during the agitation Sergeant ----- has not been committed for trial. He, too, is an American.

4. Commonly called 'General -----' drilled the diggers during the memorable three days prior to the Eureka affair; during that time sported Commissioner Amos' horse. Boasts of having shot Captain Wise. Is known to the Government, but has not been apprehended. He says that he has got an amnesty for himself from the Governor, and that since his case has been referred to, he has received a hint from the Governor to make himself scarce.

I state these particulars as they are circulated, and as I believe they can be proved. They require no comment. They do no injury to the Americans, who are likely to feel themselves highly flattered by being singled out for such distinguished consideration. What does his Excellency say to these accusations? How does he reconcile such conduct with his famous inaugural speech, when he vowed that he would turn neither to the right hand nor the left? If these reports were confined to a limited circle, I should not ask you to publish them; but as they are the talk of the town, they should be either authoritatively contradicted or, if true, the Governor should be taken to task.

A BRITISH CITIZEN January 20th, 1855