

1877.
NEW ZEALAND.

FIJI, FRIENDLY ISLANDS, AND NEW CALEDONIA

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO THE ANNEXATION OR ABANDONMENT OF).

Return to an Address of the House of Representatives, dated 5th July, 1876.

“For copies of all correspondence between the Governor of New Zealand and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, from the years 1845 to 1853 inclusive, relating to the annexation or abandonment of the Fiji Islands, the Friendly Islands, New Caledonia, or any other islands in the Pacific Ocean.”

No. 1.

His Excellency Governor Sir G. GREY to the Right Hon. Earl GREY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Auckland, 14th March, 1848.

I have the honor to report for the information of Her Majesty's Government that application has recently been made to me by some of the inhabitants, and by the principal chiefs of the Friendly Islands, as also by some of the inhabitants and principal chiefs of the Fiji Islands, requesting, in the first place, that they might be permitted to become subjects of Her Majesty; and, in the second place, if this request could not be immediately complied with, that I would visit them, and advise with them upon their present condition, suggesting for their adoption such measures as seemed likely to promote their further advancement in civilization, and to prevent the recurrence of the disturbances which were constantly taking place among them.

At the same time I have received from other sources authentic accounts of outrages of various kinds which are being committed throughout these islands by Europeans, or by Natives instigated thereto by Europeans, and of wars arising from these causes, which are greatly thinning the population, and producing much unhappiness and distress to the inhabitants.

Amongst the outrages of this nature is the one more particularly alluded to in my Despatch No. 9, of the 10th instant, in which are detailed statements regarding a species of trade in the inhabitants which has been commenced in the Pacific, as also of an apparent murder, committed under extraordinary circumstances, at the Island of Rotuma. The enclosed memorial from some European inhabitants of the Fiji Islands shows also the evils which bad European characters are entailing upon those islands.

A consideration of the several statements at various times made to me regarding the present state of the islands in the Pacific has led me to conclude that a very general desire prevails upon the part of the inhabitants of the Friendly Islands and of the Fiji Islands, both European and Native, to be brought under Great Britain, in the same manner that the New Zealand Islands have been.

This desire I suppose to have originated in the following causes:—

1st. There are a large number of respectable British subjects, missionaries and traders, resident in those islands, who must exercise a great influence over the native inhabitants of them, and who, being anxious to obtain security for their persons and property, and foreseeing either that they must fall under some European Power, or that a state of constantly-increasing anarchy and confusion will prevail, are very anxious, if practicable, to secure the protection of British laws and the advantage of British government and commerce, and who probably also have some fear of France making the disturbances now prevailing, and which are likely to increase, the reason for taking possession of these islands.

2nd. The natives influenced by their European friends, led by the representations of New Zealanders who are resident amongst them, and who describe what is taking place in their own country, probably, also, alarmed at the recent disturbances in the Pacific, and influenced in some degree by religious feelings, conceive, and I think justly, that their greatest hopes of future prosperity and happiness rest upon their incorporation with the British Empire.

When I was made fully aware of these several circumstances, I requested Captain Maxwell, upon his visiting these islands in H.M.S. “Dido,” to institute certain inquiries into their present state, and the probable wishes of the inhabitants. From the enclosed copies of my correspondence with Captain Maxwell, your Lordship will see that I carefully warned that officer that I do not consider myself in any way authorized to entertain any proposition for the surrender to Her Majesty of the sovereignty of any islands in the Pacific Ocean, or to enter into any negotiations with their chiefs upon such subjects, but that I thought that the present friendly feelings which the inhabitants of the islands in the Pacific so generally entertain for Great Britain should if possible be fostered and promoted.

Acting upon these views, Captain Maxwell has visited the Friendly Islands, and I herewith enclose a copy of his very interesting report upon the present state of these islands.

Your Lordship will find that he reports that he is, after personal inquiries upon the spot, of opinion that the information which had previously reached me is correct, and that the nominal King of these islands and many of his principal chiefs much desire British protection, and that the establishment of such a protectorate would be popular and acceptable to all the Christian part of the population.

Captain Maxwell, however, points out that a considerable portion, probably about one-third of the native population, are still heathens. Some portion of these are, however, probably, really Roman Catholics, but I do not at the present moment anticipate any hostility to the British race upon the part of any of the natives of the Friendly Islands, whether heathen or the contrary.

The whole population of the Friendly Islands are estimated by Captain Maxwell at something less than 18,000 souls, and he states that he regards them as pre-eminently capable of improvement, being in his opinion the finest of the Polynesian race which he has seen, having all the aptitude of learning usually possessed by that race, combined with an energy of character, perseverance, and ingenuity, qualities in which he considers the Polynesian race generally as deficient.

Captain Maxwell was not able to visit the Fiji Islands, in order that he might ascertain the accuracy of the statements which have reached me of a desire existing on the part of their principal chiefs of being brought under the protection of Great Britain. I have, however, no reason to doubt that such is their wish. I am informed that the inhabitants of this group amount to nearly 300,000 souls.

Upon the whole, then, it may be calculated that, should Great Britain assent to the desire of the inhabitants of the Friendly and Fiji Islands, and allow them to cede the sovereignty of their country to the British Crown, or should those islands be in any way occupied, a population of about 320,000 souls would come under British control.

Under any circumstances, your Lordship will probably think it proper that some reply should be returned to the memorial forwarded by the late King of Tonga to Her Majesty on the 19th February, 1844, expressing their desire to become Her Majesty's subjects; of which memorial a copy was forwarded to me by the present principal chiefs of the Friendly Islands, in another letter, upon the 28th of August last. I have enclosed for your Lordship's information a copy of this letter, and of the original memorial, which show that for nearly four years the inhabitants have not departed from the intention expressed in the memorial of their late King. If it is not thought prudent that any reply should be returned to this memorial, your Lordship will instruct me whether Her Majesty's Government would wish me to comply with the request of these islanders that I should visit them and advise with them upon their present state, or what answer they would wish me to return to such applications for the future.

The circumstances which have recently transpired in reference to the islands of the Pacific induce me to offer for your Lordship's information the following general observations upon the existing state of British interests in this quarter of the globe, which may, perhaps, not be without interest to your Lordship.

Great Britain in occupying New Zealand took a very important step. In occupying these islands she secured a country offering excellent harbours for her shipping, affording supplies of timber of the finest quality for ship-building, flax for cordage, and ample supplies of coal, and provisions of every kind.

But these islands, moreover, present another remarkable advantage for Great Britain. Colonies in time of war are generally objects of great concern, and of considerable expense to the mother-country, as presenting weak points to an enemy upon which he is likely to seize; whilst in the case of New Zealand, from the warlike character of its inhabitants, their aptitude for military service, and their growing attachment to Great Britain, there can be no doubt that, so long as it is so governed as to secure the affections of its inhabitants, it would in time of war be perfectly safe as against any force which a European Power could detach to these seas, but it would even be able to afford valuable and powerful assistance in time of need for the protection of our neighbouring Australian settlements.

At the present moment, also, this Government could, in the event of any war with France, immediately raise a force which could without difficulty take and hold the French possessions in these seas.

In the same manner I think that any extension of our possessions in these seas would not be a source of weakness but of strength, if such possession was assured with the consent of the inhabitants of the territory occupied, and if their good will was retained, which it easily might be. The islands of the Pacific would all soon afford a sufficient revenue for their own Government, and a sufficient force not only for their own protection but for aggressive movements against any other power, should a necessity for such movements ever unfortunately arise.

On the other hand, it must be observed that these islands would present the same advantages to France, or to any other Power which might occupy them with the consent of its inhabitants, and this disadvantage would then be presented to Great Britain, that France could at any moment raise in the Pacific a very formidable force within a few days sail of Great Britain's valuable colonial possessions in Australia, whilst France would at the same time have within her own colonial possessions in this quarter of the world a native force which could, even if large detachments were made for aggressive purposes, hold their own islands against any force which we could detach against them, and this without occasioning the slightest drain upon the military resources of France.

It may be urged that the now unoccupied islands may still remain unoccupied by any European Power, but I think that such a supposition must prove incorrect; some European Power must interfere to prevent the disturbances which will certainly take place, and which have already commenced, and it is hardly to be doubted, looking to the advantages they offer, but that some European Power will avail itself of so plausible an excuse to occupy these islands, even if this should be done without the consent of the inhabitants of them; and I then think, from the character of the Polynesian race, and from their aptitude for civilization, that they would in a few years overcome any antipathy to the occupiers of their soil, and become amalgamated with them.

It should also be remarked that at the present moment Great Britain could probably obtain possession of the Friendly and Fiji Islands with the almost universal consent and at the request of their inhabitants; but such an opportunity will soon cease to exist, and is not likely again to present itself. The inhabitants of the islands in the Pacific are daily increasing their supplies of arms and ammunition; they are constantly becoming more and more corrupted by the outcasts of European society, who take refuge in those islands, and who, together with their offspring, are gradually creating difficulties and complicated interests, the result of which will produce questions which will render the friendly cession of these islands in a few years impracticable, and the conquest of them a matter of great expense and difficulty.

I would also observe that the occupation of them by Great Britain, under a judicious system, would not entail any additional expense upon the mother-country. If, from unforeseen circumstances, any partial disturbances arose in any one of these islands, a force of the natives of another island would instantly suppress them—and the men composing this force would be quite as amenable to discipline, and as free from ferocity and cruelty, as a European force—so that war would not, under such circumstances, present any additional horrors, nor would it entail any additional demands upon the military force of the mother-country. Indeed, I doubt if, under judicious management, anything more than partial and insignificant disturbances would take place, and as must always arise in semi-barbarous communities, but which would be infinitely less disastrous and general than their present wars.

It certainly must be conceded that for a few years, until a sufficient revenue was raised, the cost of the civil government of these islands would entail some expense upon the British treasury; but in compensation a great extension would at once be given to British commerce, and a large and constantly-increasing demand would be created for British-manufactured goods, whilst in a very few years the several islands would yield an ample revenue to defray the expenses of their own government, and a wide field would be opened in civil appointments for the employment of young men, whose time is now wasted in hopeless and discontented idleness, but who, in the civilization and government of the inhabitants of the islands in the Pacific Ocean, would have presented to them an occupation of the most useful and interesting kind, the result of which would confer the greatest benefits upon the whole human race.

It only remains for me to add that the proximity of these islands to our possessions in Australia and New Zealand, and the altered state of British and French interests in these seas, render the question of their occupation more important and very different in kind from the similar question which arose some few years since in reference to the Sandwich Islands.

The Right Hon. Earl Gray, &c.

I have, &c.,
G. GREY.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

J. S. POLACK, Esq., to the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New Zealand,

Consulate of the United States of America, New Zealand,
Auckland, 20th December, 1847.

SIR,—

I have the honor to enclose the copy of a protest received this day, the original of which is in this office, made by three American shipmasters trading at the Fiji Group, and addressed to G. M. Williams, Esq., U.S., Commercial Agent at those islands, relative to the illegal conduct of a British subject named Charles Pickering, whose conduct (Mr. Williams states) has greatly conduced to foster the warlike feelings of the natives, and greatly injure the commerce of the islands.

Having been informed that Captain Maxwell, the Senior Naval Officer of this station, is about to visit the Fiji Group, I have to request that His Excellency the Governor will be pleased to direct the attention of that officer to the subject of this complaint.

I have, &c.,
J. S. POLACK,
U.S. Vice-Consul.

The Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

From SHIPMASTERS at Fiji to G. M. WILLIAMS, Esq.

SIR,—

Nukulau, Fiji Islands, 16th September, 1847.

We, the undersigned, masters of American vessels now lying in the Port of Nukulau, take the liberty to address you in the manner following, to wit:—

We, from our own experience, and from information received from many respectable white residents in these islands, hereby protest against a man, by name Charles Pickering, a subject of Great Britain, as a person dangerous alike to foreigners residing here, and also to masters of vessels visiting the islands.

He has resided here for many years, and by his perfect acquaintance with the language of the country, together with his natural duplicity of character, he has acquired great influence with the natives. This he uses to the injury of shipmasters, and for his own benefit.

He has also fomented disturbances among different tribes (of which matter, we are informed, report has been already made to you), and has indirectly, if not with *malice prepense*, been the cause of the death of two white men within the last three years.

These, with many other charges against this man, which we believe can be fully substantiated by white residents, warrant us in pronouncing the said Pickering as a person dangerous to the property of these islands, to the residents, and to masters of vessels visiting for recruits.

We, therefore, in the absence of any representative of the British Government, lay this matter before you, with a request that a representation of the same may be made to the proper authorities urging the removal of this man from the islands.

We have, &c.,

STEPHEN CUTTER,
Master of barque "Auckland," of Lynn, Mass., U.S.A.
T. P. DAVENPORT,
Master of schooner "Alfred," New Bedford, Mass., U.S.A.
H. T. SAUNDERS,
Master of schooner "Warwick," of Salem.

G. M. Williams, Esq.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

His Excellency Governor Sir G. GREY to Captain MAXWELL, R.N.

SIR,—

Government House, Auckland, 23rd December, 1847.

In reference to the instructions which have been issued to you by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty upon the subject of your visiting the Navigator Islands, I have now, in compliance with the wishes of the Home Government, the honor to forward the following observations upon the subjects affecting British interests in the Pacific, which appear to require immediate attention.

In my separate letters upon the questions which had arisen in the Friendly Islands, at Rotuma, and New Caledonia, I detailed the reasons which made me think it of great importance that you should visit these places. I need, therefore, no further allude to them; but I think it right to add that I also feel extremely anxious that you should, if possible, visit the Fiji Islands.

I understand that the Fiji Group contains nearly 300,000 inhabitants. It produces also articles of the greatest importance for our colonies in Australia and New Zealand, and for which an immediate and extensive demand exists. There appears, therefore, no reason why an important and constantly-increasing trade should not at once be commenced between these colonies and the Fiji Group, which trade, from the number and inhabitants of the Fiji Islands, and from the nature of the articles which would form their imports, would be of considerable value and importance to Great Britain; in fact, their imports would consist almost wholly of British-manufactured goods.

I have also information, upon which I can rely, that at the present time the Fijians are more favourable to the English than to any other nation, and that it might be easy to confirm these feelings of attachment, and to secure a predominant influence over them.

The Fijian chiefs have also expressly sent to me, begging that they may be visited by a vessel of war, and declaring their regard for and attachment to the British nation. I fear, therefore, that the fact of your being in the immediate vicinity of these islands and not visiting them might have a bad effect. Again, the other European residents in the Fijis have complained of the misconduct of a British subject there, and have appealed for redress. A prompt answer to this appeal would, I have no doubt, have a beneficial influence over the whole of that part of the Pacific, and would operate as a check upon the misconduct of any other European residents in the neighbouring islands. For the foregoing reasons I therefore feel very anxious that you should, if practicable, visit the Fiji Group.

The subjects upon which it appears at the present moment especially desirable that you should collect information are—

1st. The probable number of natives inhabiting the several groups of islands which you may visit.
2nd. The probable number of Europeans inhabiting the same islands, and the nations to which they belong.

3rd. The present nature of the Government of the different groups, whether there are any persons with whom a civilized nation could treat, and whether there is any person or body of persons who are generally recognized as exercising sovereign authority.

4th. What articles of exports the several islands would afford, either as natural or cultivated productions.

5th. What articles of import they would take in exchange for their exports.

6th. Whether any and what means have been adopted for raising a revenue in any of these islands; and, if so, what amount is yearly raised.

Many other subjects of interest will doubtless present themselves to you, information regarding which would prove most valuable to the British Government.

I have directed that the packages of articles named in the enclosed list, intended as presents for the chiefs of the islands you may visit, should be sent on board the "Dido." One of these packages is addressed to "George," the principal chief of the Tonga Islands; the others are intended to be distributed in such manner as you may think most proper and most likely to promote the interest of the service upon which you are proceeding.

Captain Maxwell, R.N.

I have, &c.,

G. GREY.

P.S.—I have also enclosed a list by the Rev. Mr. Lawry of the presents which will be regarded as most valuable in the several islands, and of the quantity of goods which would be regarded as a sufficient present.

G. GREY.

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

His Excellency Governor Sir G. GREY to Captain MAXWELL, R.N., Senior Officer.

SIR,—

Government House, Auckland, 23rd December, 1847.

I have the honor to transmit for your information copies of the papers named in the margin. You will perceive that these papers relate to an alleged wish upon the part of the principal

chief of the Friendly Islands, and as I am informed of the inhabitants of those islands generally, to place their country under the protection and Government of the Queen.

I am in no way authorized either to entertain or enter into negotiations of this character, and I apprehend that your powers, as well as my own, extend on such subjects no farther than the general duty of taking such immediate measures as may appear most likely to protect British interests, until we can receive further instructions from the Home Government.

It is, however, I think quite clear that you should, if practicable, visit the Friendly Islands and put yourself in communication with the principal chief, doing your utmost to promote and confirm the feelings of friendship and regard which are at present entertained by those islanders for the British race.

Indeed, I think that the fact of your visiting other islands in the immediate neighbourhood of Tonga, the inhabitants of which have neither such strong claims upon us as those of Tonga, and have not made any similar friendly advances, would, if you neglected to visit the latter island, afford its inhabitants strong grounds of complaint and annoyance, and might seriously injure British interests in that quarter.

I hear that it is by no means improbable that you may meet George, the principal chief of Tonga, in the Navigators Islands, where he has proceeded with the view of endeavouring to terminate a war now prevailing there. In this case it might be in your power to offer him a passage back to his own country, or to render him some similar service, which might produce a favourable impression upon the inhabitants of the Friendly Islands.

I shall feel much obliged to you if you would be kind enough to deliver to George Tubou the accompanying letter addressed to him, as also a box containing presents for him, which I have directed to be sent on board the "Dido."

I have, &c.,
G. GREY.

Captain Maxwell, R.N.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

His Excellency Governor Sir G. GREY to GEORGE TUBOU, Nukualopa, Tonga.

SIR,— Government House, Auckland, New Zealand, 22nd December, 1847.

This letter will be delivered to you by Captain Maxwell, of H.M.S. "Dido," who is the officer in command of H.M. ships and vessels on these coasts. I beg that you will communicate to him your wishes, and acquaint him with the manner in which I can be of any future service to you. Captain Maxwell is a personal friend of mine, and I can therefore with confidence recommend you to rely upon his advice, and to trust to his affording you any assistance which he may feel justified in giving.

Your letter of the 28th August did not reach me until yesterday. I now lose no time in assuring you of the interests with which I have watched the progress of your people in Christianity and civilization, and of the sincere pleasure it will afford me to render you every assistance in promoting their happiness and prosperity.

The Queen of England will, I have no doubt, hear with great pleasure that even in your country her name is known and loved, and Her Majesty will, I am satisfied, willingly aid you in your efforts for the advancement of those who are dependent upon you; indeed, her goodness is such that to spread the blessings of peace and concord over the earth has constantly been her aim, and even these parts so distant from her own home will be to Her Majesty objects of the most lively interest if she can assist in raising the inhabitants of them from vice and barbarism to Christianity and civilization.

I beg that you will under any circumstances of difficulty communicate with me. If I can send any animals or plants to you which are not at present to be found in your islands I shall feel great pleasure in doing so, if you will write to me for them.

It may be in my power next year to visit you. I shall make a point of doing so if no unexpected difficulties present themselves. If you could visit me I should feel great pleasure in receiving you or any members of your family, and I can without difficulty at any time send a vessel from hence to convey you back to your own country.

Captain Maxwell will deliver to you a small present, which I have sent to you, feeling that in thus evincing the regard of my countrymen for you I shall act in conformity with the wishes of the Queen of England.

Begging you to accept the assurances of my high consideration for you,

I have, &c.,

G. GREY,

Mr. George Tubou.

Governor-in-Chief.

No. 2.

His Excellency Governor Sir G. GREY to the Right Hon. Earl GREY.

MY LORD,— Government House, Auckland, 5th April, 1848.

In reference to my Despatch No. 9, of the 10th ultimo, reporting the outrages which had been committed at the Island of Rotuma, I have now the honor to state that, upon considering all the circumstances connected with that particular case, as also the facts which have recently been brought to my knowledge in reference to the various islands in the Pacific, I have thought it my duty to issue a notice offering, on behalf of the British Government, a reward of £200 to any person or persons who shall apprehend, or who shall give such information as shall lead to the apprehension of, the offender or offenders who were concerned in shooting the chief Mushecock, at the Island of Rotuma, on or about the 12th day of July last.

I anticipate that the issue of this notice will produce a very useful effect upon the lawless British subjects now scattered through the Pacific, by showing them that they are still liable to be tried for the crime of murder committed in one of the neighbouring islands; whilst the inhabitants of the islands in the Pacific, amongst whom translations of this notice will be promulgated, will be made aware that the British Government will, in as far as practicable, protect them from injuries from British subjects, and that there is thus a power to whom they can look for redress in the case of outrages similar to those which were committed at Rotuma.

The Right Hon. Earl Grey, &c.

I have, &c.,
G. GREY.

No. 3.

The Right Hon. Earl GREY to His Excellency Governor GREY.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 9th October, 1848.

Your Despatch No. 13, of the 14th March last, containing suggestions for the extension of the British dominion in the Pacific, has been communicated by me to Viscount Palmerston, and has received from his Lordship and from myself that attentive consideration which its contents require.

It is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to accept at present that submission to her sovereignty which is offered by the chief of Tonga and by the chiefs of the Fiji Islands, of whom your despatch makes mention. Independently of other reasons it is to be apprehended, notwithstanding your arguments as to the ultimate economy of the measure, that the expense which such an extension of empire would necessarily occasion would be larger than Her Majesty's advisers would think themselves justified in proposing to Parliament. The offers which you have received must therefore be declined, but in a manner as conciliatory as possible, accompanied by the expression of Her Majesty's desire to promote as far as may be in her power the welfare of the inhabitants of those islands, although she is unable to accept their proffered allegiance.

Her Majesty's Government have it, however, under consideration whether the appointment of British Consular Agents in places situated in the Pacific, and in the Friendly Islands and Fiji Islands in the first instance, might not be conducive to British interests in that part of the world. The duties of such Agents might be to give instructions and assistance to the native authorities towards the establishment of a regular Government to protect British subjects, and to conclude treaties with such chiefs or Powers as they might consider of sufficient importance. Such treaties might contain stipulations both political and commercial. They might recite, by way of preamble, that Her Majesty is anxious to assist in promoting the progress of prosperity, civilization, and religion in those islands, and that she accords to their inhabitants her disinterested friendship.

The contracting chiefs should engage to receive such Consuls or other officers, and such missionary and other teachers, as Her Majesty may send among them for their benefit and instruction, and that all British subjects and their property and commerce shall be well treated within their respective islands. The chiefs should also contract, in return for the aid afforded them, not intentionally or willingly to do wrong to the subjects of any foreign Power; and it might be either made a further engagement on the part of the native contracting parties that, if involved in disputes with foreign Powers, they should address themselves to the Queen of England, and leave to her to determine what they should do; or, if this be considered as imposing too great a responsibility on Her Majesty's Government, it might be made part of their Agent's instructions to effect the same object by persuasion as far as they may find it in their power.

It is conceived that, if it be found practicable to carry these views into execution, many of the advantages which you dwell upon with so much force may be attained, while this course would not be open to the obvious objections which must apply to an extension of the sovereignty of Great Britain in those parts. You will be fully informed of any measures which it may be deemed advisable to adopt on the subject, and should such Agents be appointed I will request Lord Palmerston to put them in communication with you. You are also desired to furnish Her Majesty's Government with any additional explanation of your own views on the subject, and any facts concerning it which may fall within your knowledge. But I do not think it would be at present expedient that you should leave your Government for the purpose of visiting those islands.

I take the same opportunity of acknowledging your Despatch No. 33 of the 5th of April last, respecting the outrage at Rotuma, of which you have given me previous intelligence. I approve of the Proclamation which you issued on that occasion, and I trust that your exertions may be followed by good results, if not by securing the punishment of this particular offence, at least by showing the light in which such conduct is regarded by the British Government.

Governor Sir G. Grey, &c.

I have, &c.,
GREY.

No. 4.

His Excellency Sir G. GREY to the Right Hon. Earl GREY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Auckland, 6th November, 1849.

In reference to my despatches specified in the margin on the subject of the present condition of the various islands in the Pacific Ocean lying in the vicinity of these colonies, I have the honor to transmit a letter which I have received from Captain John E. Erskine, R.N., commanding H.M. ship "Havannah," dated Isle of Pines, 22nd September, 1849, containing representations which the principal chief of the friendly islands is anxious to have brought under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

The Right Hon. Earl Grey, &c.

I have, &c.,
G. GREY.

No. 5.

Governor Sir G. GREY to the Right Hon. Earl GREY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, 11th February, 1852.

I have the honor to transmit to your Lordship an extract of a letter I have received from the Government of the Sandwich Islands. I take the liberty of thus troubling your Lordship because I am anxious that you should see that the inhabitants of the islands in the Pacific are fully aware of the rapid and remarkable progress which the New Zealand Islands have made, that they see that that progress is attributable to the just and liberal line of policy which Great Britain has pursued towards the Native race, and that they are aware that islands circumstanced as those in the Pacific are cannot make any satisfactory and lasting advances without the support of such a great and enlightened nation as Great Britain, and that they consequently view the extension of her power without jealousy or alarm.

The Right Hon. Earl Grey, &c.

I have, &c.,
G. GREY.

No. 6.

His Excellency Governor Sir G. GREY to the Right Hon. Earl GREY.

MY LORD DUKE,—

Government House, Auckland, 15th December, 1853.

I have the honor to report for your Grace's information that as I called off the Isle of Pines a few days since in a small colonial vessel, a European came on board and acquainted me that some French men-of-war had recently arrived there, and had taken possession of the Isle of Pines and of New Caledonia, that they had left seamen on those islands who daily hoisted the French flag on them, that depôts for steamers of war were being established by the French at the Isle of Pines and New Caledonia, that the French vessels had then proceeded to Tahiti for the purpose of bringing troops to the Isle of Pines and New Caledonia, and that other preparations were making for occupying the above-named islands with a military and naval force.

2. I have further the honor to report for your Grace's information that, from the excellence of the harbours in those islands, from their commanding position in regard to our colonies in Australia and New Zealand, from their lying directly in the line of communication between those groups of colonies and America, from their in a great measure commanding the route by which our vessels must pass from these colonies either to Great Britain or from New Zealand to India, the occupation of the Isle of Pines and New Caledonia will enable the French, in the event of any future war, most effectually to harass the British trade and colonies in this part of the world; indeed, it would have been impossible to have chosen any other points in this part of the world which would enable France in the event of a war so effectually to embarrass our commerce in these seas and to distress our colonies, that, looking to the fact that the French have themselves no colonies or interests whatever in the neighbourhood of these islands, it is difficult to form any other conclusion than that the occupation of those islands by the French springs from a line of policy which has for its ultimate probable object consequences such as I have above stated.

3. There being, however, some grounds for thinking that Great Britain has a claim to those islands, I have addressed a letter to the Senior Naval Officer on this station requesting him to make a communication to that effect to the French authorities. I enclose for your Grace's information copies of my letters to the Senior Naval Officer, which will put you fully in information of the grounds upon which I have taken this step.

His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, &c.

I have, &c.,
G. GREY.

Enclosure in No. 6.

His Excellency Sir G. GREY to the SENIOR NAVAL OFFICER, Sydney,

SIR,—

Government House, Auckland, 15th December, 1853.

I have the honor to acquaint you that a few days since I called off the Isle of Pines, and was there informed that some French naval officers had within the last few months taken possession of that island and of New Caledonia, upon behalf of the French Government.

2. It is therefore my duty to request that you will, with as little delay as practicable, despatch one of Her Majesty's vessels under your orders to the Isle of Pines and New Caledonia for the purpose of notifying to the French officers at one of those stations that there are strong grounds for believing that the Isle of Pines and at least a part of New Caledonia are regarded by the British Government as being British territories, and for thinking that this fact has been asserted by various public acts of the British Government and British authorities in relation to the Colony of New Zealand and its dependencies; and that it is therefore probable that the senior French officer should be warned that such is the case, lest he should take any steps in prejudice of British rights to such islands, until this question has been decided between the Governments of Great Britain and France, to which Governments the question has been submitted.

3. I have further the honor to transmit the copy of a letter which I have addressed to the Governor-General of Australia upon this subject.

The Senior Naval Officer, Sydney.

I have, &c.,
G. GREY.

No. 7.

His Excellency Sir G. GREY to His Grace the Duke of NEWCASTLE.

MY LORD DUKE,—

Government House, Auckland, 31st December, 1853.

I have the honor to state that I recently called at Norfolk Island, with the Bishop of New Zealand, and that we there found that the convict establishment upon the island was being broken up, and a general idea prevailed that the Government proposed to give up the island to the inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island.

I beg to state to your Grace that I propose, in conjunction with the Bishop of New Zealand, to submit for your Grace's consideration a plan by which Norfolk Island might not only be made available as a habitation for the people of Pitcairn's Island, but might be made a nursery from which Christianity and civilization might be spread throughout all these islands in the Pacific, which still remain in a state of idolatry and barbarism. The plan is simply the adoption of the system of industrial schools for the education of the native race, which is at present in existence in New Zealand. It would entail no expense upon the British Government, but the surrender of the island and buildings upon it for the purposes of carrying out this plan, together with other property now upon the island, and the removal of which, from the difficulty of landing and embarking stores there, would cost more than the value of the property, whilst the benefits which would accrue to the commerce of the British Empire from opening up to it the valuable trade which could be maintained with the inhabitants of such fertile islands, which yield such highly valuable commodities, would be incalculable. Yet such a trade could in no way be more certainly at once opened up than by rendering their highly-intelligent inhabitants Christians, and by inducing them to adopt our language, laws, and customs, which they evince an earnest desire to do.

I know no project the execution of which would yield greater advantages to the empire, or would render the Minister who carried it out a greater benefactor, not only to his country, but to the whole human race. I trust, therefore, that until the details of this plan have been brought under your Grace's notice, you will take no steps for finally disposing of Norfolk Island.

I have, &c.,

G. GREY.

His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, &c.