

## MEMORANDUM by His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR.

Wellington, 2nd March, 1881.

THE Governor transmits herewith to the Premier, for the information of the Cabinet, a memorandum lately written by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the Western Pacific.

The Governor would wish this memorandum to form part of any papers presented to Parliament with reference to the proceedings of the late Inter-colonial Conference.

ARTHUR H. GORDON.

## MEMORANDUM by the HIGH COMMISSIONER for the WESTERN PACIFIC.

I HAVE received from the Governor of New South Wales a copy of the Minutes of the Proceedings of the Intercolonial Conference lately held at Sydney. Among them will be found (p. 10, pp. 12-13) the Report of a Committee chosen to consider a Resolution calling attention to the state of affairs in Polynesia, proposed by the Hon. A. H. Palmer, and to examine the papers relating to the appointment of a High Commissioner for the Western Pacific.

On hearing that the Conference was about to enter on such an inquiry, I conveyed to Lord Augustus Loftus the expression of my opinion that some communication should be addressed to me upon the subject, and stated my willingness to afford any information which the Conference might require, and without which it was, I thought, improbable that the members of the Committee could attain an accurate knowledge of the matters on which it was directed to report. My telegram was communicated to the Conference by Lord Augustus Loftus, who was, in reply, requested to inform me of the appointment of the Committee, and that the Conference would willingly receive any information which I might desire to communicate to it. Though very ready to furnish the Conference with papers or statements of fact asked for by it, it was of course impossible for me to submit, unsought for, anything like defence or explanation of my own proceedings or conduct, to a body to which I was in no way responsible, and with which I had no official relation. I therefore replied by asking Lord Augustus Loftus to thank the Conference for its communication, and inform it that I should be happy to afford any assistance or information which might be desired. Of this offer no advantage was taken by the Conference; and on the same day on which it was made the Committee presented their Report, in the preamble to which it is stated to have been prepared, "having before them the Commission to Sir A. Gordon, the High Commissioner and Consul-General for the Western Pacific"—a statement in which it appears to me that some error must be involved.\* The Resolutions recommended by the Committee were, with some modifications, adopted by the Conference.

These Resolutions have been submitted to the consideration of the Imperial Government, from which they will no doubt receive that respectful attention which is due to any recommendation emanating from such a source. It would be out of place here to discuss them; but the Appendix to the Report of the Committee contains matter which may with advantage receive some immediate comment from me.

The contents of that Appendix are somewhat singular. No statistical table is given from which information could be drawn as to the comparative frequency of murders among Europeans in the Pacific at different times, or the proportions which such murders bore to the number of European residents in those seas now and formerly,—official or authentic accounts of massacres recently perpetrated are altogether wanting, and other evidence in support of the Resolutions of the Committee will be as vainly looked for. All the information given with regard to outrages recently committed is contained in a telegram without date, and addressed to some unnamed individual,† reporting the murder of the crew‡ of the "Prosperity," and four newspaper paragraphs containing details of other

\* My commission as Consul General, and my full powers under the Great Seal, have never been published or communicated to any Colonial Government; nor am I aware that my commission as High Commissioner has been so, though such may be the case.

† This telegram is said, but evidently erroneously, to be addressed to the Hon. A. H. Palmer, who is referred to in it as a third party. "As Mr. Palmer is in Sydney, please get him to use influence." This is not the language of a telegram addressed to Mr. Palmer himself.

‡ Not British subjects.