

1884.

NEW ZEALAND.

CONFEDERATION AND ANNEXATION.

(CORRESPONDENCE UPON THE QUESTIONS GENERALLY.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

Governor Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS, G.C.M.G. C.B. to the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, June 16, 1883.

With reference to the telegram which I transmitted to your Lordship on the 9th instant, on the subject of the desirability of the establishment of British rule over the New Hebrides and other islands of the Pacific, I am desirous of laying before your Lordship the special reasons why it appears to me that such action would be beneficial to the Australasian Colonies, and should be carried into effect without unnecessary delay, although, of course, much anxious consideration will be required before taking so serious a step.

2. The distance between these colonies and the possessions of any other European Power (with the single exception of the French island of New Caledonia) is at present one of the principal reasons for their comparative security from foreign attack. It is believed here, that this state of things will in all probability ere long be changed, as more than one Power is understood to be desirous of taking possession of some of these islands, which might, in the event of a European war, become a base for hostile operations, and at other times be a constant source of jealousy and inconvenience.

3. The trade between the Islands and Australasia is already considerable, and likely, in all probability, rapidly to increase. It is almost impossible that, in this event, the Islands should remain permanently in the hands of uncivilized races, and the only alternative will be the occupation by England or some other maritime nation.

4. Much inconvenience has already been felt (as your Lordship is doubtless aware) in these colonies, by New Caledonia being used as a penal settlement. It is, unfortunately, too often the fate of French and other foreign colonial possessions to become convict establishments; and there is a fear prevailing here that the New Hebrides and other islands may be thus used, and that there will be an influx into Australasia of liberated and escaped convicts, the most undesirable of all immigrants.

5. I need hardly point out to your Lordship that these colonies, rapidly increasing, as they are, in wealth and population, would be well able, in future, to undertake the management and protection of the Islands. Indeed, I believe that having to do so would be beneficial to them, as encouraging a feeling in favour of Federation, to which intercolonial free-trade would be an incident, and making them realize more fully the fact of the necessity for their providing for their own self-defence.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby.

WM. F. DRUMMOND JERVOIS.

No. 2.

The PREMIER, Tasmania, to the PREMIER, Victoria.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Hobart, June 29, 1883.

With reference to the proposal that Great Britain should take steps to prevent the New Hebrides and other South Sea Islands from being taken possession of by any Foreign Power, I observe, from the public prints, and from a telegram addressed by you to the Chief Secretary of this colony, that you are of opinion that the Australasian Colonies, as a whole, should urge on the Imperial authorities the annexation to the British Empire of these islands, and should agree to defray the cost of their government.

It appears to me that any cost attending the maintenance of order, in any islands which the British Government might think proper to take possession of, should be borne by the particular colony to which they might be attached, and which would reap any commercial or fiscal advantage

NOTE.—So much of this paper as does not refer to New Zealand has been extracted from Imperial Blue Books,