

No. 13.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

PREMIER, New Zealand.

Pacific. Nothing further relating claims Foreign Powers, beyond statement Lord Derby's letter to the Agents-General.

BELL.
London, September 28.

No. 14.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., September 20, 1883.

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the letter which the Agents-General have received from Lord Derby, in reply to their representations on the Pacific Islands question. See A.-3, p. 136.

I have, &c.

WALTER KENNAWAY,
For the Agent-General.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

No. 15.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W. September 28, 1883.

I have to return you my best thanks for your despatch of the 11th August, on the subject of the Pacific Islands question, and for the various information which accompanied it.

Since writing to you on the 20th instant, enclosing Lord Derby's answer to the Agents-General, I have received your cablegram desiring me to send you full particulars as to the claims of Foreign Powers on the Islands: but I believe the only information the Colonial Office possesses on that subject at the present time was given in Lord Derby's letter. You will probably have noticed that the letter was dated 31st August, while we only received it about the middle of September; but that date had to be affixed, on account of including the letter in the papers presented to the Imperial Parliament.

I regret to have to inform you that the Agent-General of New South Wales has found it his duty to withdraw from the concert, presumably in consequence of new orders from his Government; and this unfortunate circumstance, like the previous withdrawal of South Australia, must have a bad effect, if the other Governments should desire their Agents-General to take any further steps at the Colonial Office. I think we all alike regret that, as yet, we know nothing of whether the joint representation we made to Lord Derby on the 21st July was approved or not by our Governments.

I have much that I should like to say to you on the present aspect of the question; but, until I know the view which you took of our representation to Lord Derby, I think I had better say as little as possible of my own, especially after reflecting on the general tone of the debate in the House of Representatives, which you sent me on the 11th August. In the meanwhile, I may point out, that the English Press has, with hardly an exception, expressed itself in generous and sympathetic language towards the colonies; being, in that respect, I believe, only the reflex and interpreter of a wide agreement in public opinion here. Nor would it be wise to assume, spite of the cold and cautious tone of Lord Derby's letter to the Agents-General, that the gravity of the question, especially in regard to the French scheme for sending swarms of dangerous criminals to the Islands, is not entirely recognized by the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.

F. D. BELL.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

No. 16.

The PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Government Offices, Wellington, November 2, 1883.

I have the honour to inform you that your letter No. 236, of the 3rd September, relative to the Annexation question, and certain correspondence thereupon with the Colonial Office, has been received.

The Premier is absent from Wellington, and, having regard to the lapse of time and to the present position of the question involved, it has been decided to leave for Major Atkinson's consideration whether any advantage is likely to be gained by further discussion upon the points raised in your letter.

I have, &c.

Sir F. Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G. Agent-General.

WM. ROLLESTON.

No. 17.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W. August 30, 1883.

Adverting to a passage in the letter from the Agents-General to the Earl of Derby on the 21st July last, where allusion is made to a proposal of Sir Julius Vogel for the formation of a trading company for the Pacific, I have received a letter from Sir Julius Vogel, of which I beg permission