

IX.—Navigator
Islands.

Commander Meade says, further, "All the chiefs of the eastern division on Tutuila have, in my presence, signed articles of confederation, and have recognized the flag hoisted by Maunga on the 2nd March, which I saluted with fifteen guns; . . . and have solemnly agreed to keep the port regulations of Pago-Pago."

He also says, "We have made a careful survey of the bay, placed buoys on the rocks, and in every way made the harbour ready for your line of steamships."

On the evening of the 31st March, I entered the harbour of Pago-Pago with the "Nebraska," with the view of selecting and arranging for a suitable coaling-station, detaining the steamer a few hours only.

The Hon. J. Vogel, Commissioner of Customs, Wellington.

I have, &c.

W. H. WEBB.

DEAR SIR,—

Notwithstanding the remark made to you by the commander of the Prussian man-of-war "Nympho," while lying in the harbour of Sydney, when questioned as to the reported intentions of his Government in regard to the Samoan group, I am now more satisfied than before his late visit to the group that those reports were well founded, and that the Prussian Government had instructed him to secure the control of Pago-Pago Harbour, and perhaps the whole group.

He presented claims against the chief of Pago-Pago, and has actually levied fines on him and other chiefs in the Island of Upola, reported at several thousands of dollars, to be paid very soon.

He arrived, however, too late—Commander Meade had made and completed his treaty.

I have, &c.

W. H. WEBB.

The Hon. J. Vogel, Wellington.

No. 5.

The Right Hon. the Earl of KIMBERLEY to Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G.

(No. 78.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 18th December, 1872.

I have to acknowledge your Despatch No. 56, of 26th June, forwarding a Ministerial memorandum on questions relating to the Navigator Islands.

I enclose, for your information, a copy of a correspondence which has passed on the subject between this office and the Foreign Office.

I have, &c.

Governor Sir G. F. Bowen, G.C.M.G.

KIMBERLEY.

Enclosures.

Mr. HOLLAND to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Foreign Office.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 11th September, 1872.

With reference to your letter of 22nd June, and to previous correspondence, I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to transmit to you, to be laid before Earl Granville, the copy of a despatch from the Governor of New Zealand, enclosing a Ministerial memorandum from the Postmaster-General of the colony respecting certain questions connected with the Navigator Islands.

I have, &c.

The Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office.

H. T. HOLLAND.

The Right Hon. E. HAMMOND to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Colonial Office.

SIR,—

Foreign Office, 20th September, 1872.

I am directed by Earl Granville to transmit to you, to be laid before the Earl of Kimberley, the accompanying copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Minister at Washington, in regard to the annexation of Samoa to the United States.

I have, &c.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

E. HAMMOND.

Sir E. THORNTON to Earl GRANVILLE.

MY LORD,—

Washington, 18th July, 1872.

On the receipt of your Lordship's Despatch No. 277, of the 22nd ultimo, I inquired of Mr. Hale, Acting Secretary of State, what was the decision of the United States Government with regard to a petition said to have been addressed to the President by the chiefs of Samoa, for the annexation of that island to the United States.

Mr. Hale replied that he was under the impression that no such petition had been received, and referred to an answer given some time ago to an inquiry made by the House of Representatives, in which Mr. Fish stated that no such request had been received. I suggested that it might have arrived since that time, and Mr. Hale promised to inquire into the matter.

On Mr. Fish's arrival here, on the 15th instant, I made the same inquiry of him upon the subject, and, after having looked into the papers, he this morning informed me that no document of the nature I described had reached the President.

He, however, told me that Captain Meade, of the United States steamer "Narragansett," had come to an arrangement with the chief of the Island of Tutuila, relative to the port of Pago-Pago. Captain Meade had made this agreement without any previous instructions or powers; but, on its arrival here, the President had deemed it expedient to transmit it to the Senate for its sanction. This body had, however, closed its session without having taken any action on this convention or agreement.

Mr. Fish said he would have been glad to have shown me this document, but he had found upon inquiry that a copy of it had not been retained either at the State or Navy Department, and that the original, being now locked up in the Senate, was not accessible.

As far as he remembered, however, its principal stipulation was that the United States should have an exclusive right to the harbour of Pago-Pago as a naval station and a coaling dépôt. This would not, however, interfere with any other vessels which might frequent the port, nor with commercial transactions. I alluded to a telegraphic report, published in to-day's newspapers, that Captain Meade had proclaimed the protectorate of the Island of Tutuila by the United States.

Mr. Fish, in reply, said that the Government had received no information of such an act, and that, if it had taken place, it had been done without any instructions.

I have the honour to enclose three printed copies of some documents relating to the Island of Tutuila, which were forwarded to the Navy Department by Captain Meade, and subsequently submitted to the House of Representatives.

They include some commercial regulations for the harbour of Pago-Pago, signed by the chief of Tutuila, which Captain Meade forwards "with his approval," and a somewhat grandiloquent address which he makes to the chiefs and people of that island.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. the Earl Granville, K.G.

EDWARD THORNTON.