

No. 101.

The PREMIER, Queensland, to the PREMIER, New Zealand.

FEDERAL COUNCIL BILL.—Would it not meet your views if it were provided that any colony might enact, in the Act adopting the Bill, that the acts of the Council should not be binding in that colony, unless adopted by its Legislature? If this would secure the adhesion of New Zealand, Is for one, should be disposed to agree; but I have not had an opportunity of consulting any other colony, as your letter only received yesterday.

Brisbane, 16th May, 1885.

S. W. GRIFFITH.

No. 102.

The PREMIER, New Zealand, to the PREMIER, Queensland.

Your suggestion would meet our views if you can get colonies to agree.

17th May, 1885.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 103.

The PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

FEDERAL BILL. Premier Queensland suggests alteration providing liberty colony adopting Bill to enact in adopting Act that measures passed Council subject subsequent approval colony's Legislature. Colonies not wishing reservation can adopt Act unconditionally. Suggestion good, and consider our Parliament insist. Try arrange.

18th May, 1885.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 104.

The PREMIER, Queensland, to the PREMIER, New Zealand.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Brisbane, 18th May, 1885.

I have the honour to enclose for your information seven printed copies of a letter which I have addressed to His Excellency Sir Anthony Musgrave, with reference to General Scratchley's circular-despatch of 11th April, 1885, upon the subject of the estimated cost of governing the British territory in New Guinea.

I have, &c.,

R. J. GRAY,
(for the Colonial Secretary.)

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

Enclosure.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Brisbane, 18th May, 1885.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt from your Excellency of General Scratchley's despatch of the 11th April, forwarding for the consideration of this Government a memorandum upon the subject of the estimated cost of governing the British territory in New Guinea.

2. Lord Derby's telegram of the 19th February to the Governors of the Australasian colonies expresses a hope that the colonial Governments will without delay confer with General Scratchley, consider with him what extent of territory inland should be annexed, and form an estimate of the probable annual cost, stating how they propose to distribute it and permanently secure their contributions; and adds that all these matters should be settled before General Scratchley goes to New Guinea, as the final declaration of sovereignty must be deferred until these arrangements are matured.

3. I have already in my letter of the 18th February, 1885, informed your Excellency of the views of this Government as to the question of the cost of the maintenance of British jurisdiction in New Guinea, and have in my letter of the 2nd April conveyed their wishes as to the extent of territory inland to be annexed. These wishes were, of course, expressed with reference to the circumstances as then known in this colony. Since that time, however, further information has been procured from a perusal of the Blue Book (C.-4, 273, 1885), laid before the Imperial Parliament, and the White Book laid before the Reichstag, from which it is, I fear, to be inferred that the time has passed when any expression of opinion on the part of the Australasian Governments on the latter point is of very material consequence.

4. Attention was called in my letter of the 18th February (following a telegram which I had the honour to ask your Excellency to send to Lord Derby on the same subject) to the deficiency of information on the question of the extent of the powers intended to be conferred on and exercised by the High Commissioner. On this point, however, the Australasian Governments are, up to the present time, without further information.

5. Upon carefully considering General Scratchley's commission and instructions, and the despatch of the 17th November, 1884, to Sir G. W. Des Vœux, High Commissioner of the Western Pacific, it becomes apparent that the Special Commissioner for New Guinea has hitherto had no legislative powers conferred upon him, and only such administrative or executive powers as may be exercised by a Deputy Commissioner under the Western Pacific Orders in Council.

6. I have adverted to these matters because, in the absence of any definite information as to the functions intended to be performed by General Scratchley, it is difficult to know what expenditure need be incurred in performing them. I am aware that it is intended that he should reside in or near to New Guinea, and I assume that he will exercise, at any rate, some legislative authority, and some judicial authority by himself or his officers, and that he will have to maintain