

rests with us. Surely all colonies can unite in strengthening hands of British Government in their efforts to protect our interests; and this we can only do by giving unanimous verdict against any concession, and against every compromise. If unanimous, or nearly so, success ought to be certain. Presume we can count on you both here and in London.

Melbourne, 28th April, 1886.

ALFRED DEAKIN,
(For the Premier.)

No. 42.

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

NEW HEBRIDES: Matter is under consideration; and, after full Cabinet, will communicate with you.

29th April, 1886.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 43.

The PREMIER to the CLERK of SYNOD of the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of OTAGO and SOUTHLAND.

REVEREND SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 8th May, 1886.

No. 40.

I have the honour to forward herewith copy of a letter which I have addressed to the Rev. Mr. Cairns, Moderator of the General Assembly, Christchurch, on the subject of the proposed annexation of the New Hebrides by France. Will you be good enough to submit it to the Synod or other Church Court at as early a date as possible, for an expression of opinion?

I have, &c.,

Rev. W. Bannerman, Clerk of Synod,
Otago and Southland Presbyterian Church.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 44.

The PREMIER to the CLERK of the DUNEDIN PRESBYTERY.

REVEREND SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 8th May, 1886.

No. 31.

Referring to your letter of the 8th April, enclosing copy of minute of the Presbytery of Dunedin, dated 7th April, on the subject of the New Hebrides, I have now the honour to enclose copy of a letter which I have addressed to the Rev. Mr. Cairns, Moderator of the General Assembly, Christchurch, with a request that he will furnish me with an early expression of the determination at which the Church may arrive. Will you be good enough to bring the matter under the notice of the Dunedin Presbytery at your early convenience?

I have, &c.,

Rev. Alex. M. Finlayson, Clerk, Presbytery, New Zealand.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 44A.

The PREMIER, New Zealand, to the PREMIERS, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 8th May, 1886.

No. 40.

I have the honour to enclose copy of a letter which I have addressed to the Moderator of the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand concerning the New Hebrides, and the attitude of the Presbyterian Church towards the proposed arrangement between England and France.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 45.

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

I HAVE received a telegraphic summary of an important despatch addressed by Agent-General to Secretary of State. As it may interest you I send you a copy of Agent-General's telegram. I do not understand what he says in the concluding part as to a change of attitude of your Agent-General. Trust there is no misunderstanding. I fully understood that Bell was to be firm in opposing the cession. Telegram is as follows: "London, sixth May.—New Hebrides: Addressed thirtieth, long despatch Secretary of State for Colonies replying to Bramston's, the latter being distinctly in favour of French pretensions. In the first place, claimed that Griffith's telegram, supported by Thurston's, with your confirmation, conclusive as to decision federal colonies; argued then statutory authority Council under Federal Act, and acceptance that authority at Hobart. Cited Council's address to Queen. Referred to Derby's promise that islands would not be ceded unless on conditions satisfactory colonies. Present French overture, whether regarded as threat or bargain, confident colonies never yield. Referred former stories French flag: if in Pacific it become the symbol of convictism, colonies must protect themselves. Discussed various points urged by Bramston—labour, geographical position. Strongly stated missionary claims. Concluded citing various instructions your telegram. Since yours received, March nineteen, about to commence action especially with reference to New Zealand correspondence, when Bell informed Hoey he had received later cabled instructions contrary sense. Are you aware of change? If so, send instructions.—ACTING AGENT-GENERAL."

8th May, 1886.

D. GILLIES,
Premier,