

Advisers, with a copy of a Resolution adopted by the Legislative Council of New Zealand on the subject of the Navigators Islands.

Her Majesty's Government are not insensible to the fact that the increase of commerce in the Pacific, and the constant advance of European settlement in those regions must render the South Sea Islands of far greater interest than formerly. They are not, however, prepared to advise Her Majesty to take upon herself further direct responsibilities, such as would be entailed upon her by the assumption of Sovereignty or of a Protectorate over the Navigators Islands.

I have, &c.,

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

KIMBERLEY.

No. 33.

COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Hon. the Earl of KIMBERLEY to Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G.

(No. 12.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 23rd February, 1872.

With reference to your Despatch No. 114, of 25th November, I transmit to you, for your information, a copy of a letter from the Astronomer-Royal, upon the subject of the arrangements for the observation of the transit of Venus in 1874.

I have to call your attention to Professor Airy's remark with respect to the instruments which he trusts will be provided by the Colony on the occasion.

I have, &c.,

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

KIMBERLEY.

Enclosure in No. 33.

Professor AIRY to Mr. HOLLAND.

Royal Observatory, Greenwich, S.E.,
19th February, 1872.

SIR,—

Again referring to your letter of the 7th instant, on the subject of the observation of the transit of Venus, 1874, in New Zealand; I have the honor to state that I have carefully perused the documents accompanying that letter, and have arrived at the following conclusions, which I request you will be pleased to place before the Right Hon. the Earl of Kimberley.

1. Combining the various considerations, astronomical and meteorological, on which the choice of a station for the Government Expedition must depend, I fix on Christchurch as the most advantageous point; and request that it may be understood in future that the Government Expedition will be located at Christchurch.

2. The principal instruments provided by the Government will be a Transit Instrument, an Altazimuth for determination of longitude by lunar vertical transits, a six-inch Equatoreal (these with their huts are ready), a four-inch Telescope, a Photographic Heliograph (these are ordered, but not ready), and clocks and other ancillary apparatus. Possibly the assistance of the local authorities may be desired for preparing huts for the last-mentioned instruments.

3. It appears exceedingly desirable that preparations should be made for observing the phenomenon at several stations (as is suggested in one of the documents enclosed with your letter of 7th February); and unusual value will attach to these observations, in consequence of the admirable system which has been adopted in New Zealand of connecting the longitudes of the principal settlements by the galvanic telegraph.

4. But I would remark, that it will be necessary that the instruments for these purposes be provided in the Colony. The Government stores at my command will be completely denuded of moveable instruments by the supplies arranged for the several stations selected in different parts of the world.

5. It may be understood that the minimum of equipment at each station should be a good 4-inch telescope, and a clock or chronometer referred to the local transit clock. Larger telescopes will be very valuable—the standard being taken as 6-inch telescopes.

6. As there is usually greater delay in procuring instruments than in making any other arrangements, I would suggest that the attention of Colonial residents be immediately called to the necessity of hastening this provision.

I have, &c.,

G. R. AIRY.

H. T. Holland, Esq.