

No. 14.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor the Most Hon. the Marquis of NORMANBY
to the Right Hon. Sir M. E. HICKS BEACH.

(No. 21.)

Government House, Wellington,

SIR,—

New Zealand, 22nd June, 1878.

In reply to your circular despatch of the 20th February, 1878, transmitting a letter from the Foreign Office enclosing a communication from the French Ambassador on the subject of the New Hebrides group, I have now the honor to enclose copy of a memorandum which I have received from my Government, and which I have been requested by Sir George Grey to forward for your consideration.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Sir M. E. Hicks Beach.

NORMANBY.

Enclosure in No. 14.

MEMORANDUM for His EXCELLENCY.

SIR GEORGE GREY presents his respectful compliments to the Marquis of Normanby, and acknowledges the receipt of the Secretary of State's despatch of 20th February last, informing this Government that Her Majesty's Advisers have assured the Government of France that Her Majesty's Government have no intention of proposing to Parliament any measure having for its object to affect the independence which the New Hebrides Islands now enjoy.

2. Sir George Grey ventures to point out that, as he believes, the New Hebrides Islands are now a possession of the British Crown. Reference to a Commission issued to Sir George Grey, as Governor of New Zealand, in 1845 or 1846, will, he thinks, show that this is the case.

3. Respecting New Caledonia, Sir George Grey would observe that, by the Commission just mentioned, he was, in fact, appointed Governor of those islands as a dependency of New Zealand; that he proceeded in a small brig to visit the group as Governor of it, and that he found that the French had, a few days before his arrival, taken possession. The question of right was, by agreement between Sir George Grey and the French Commodore, referred to their respective Governments, and New Caledonia was subsequently relinquished to the Government of France.

4. Sir George Grey respectfully submits these remarks for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and requests that the Marquis of Normanby will forward them to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and that His Excellency will also forward the enclosed memorandum by the Attorney-General of New Zealand upon the subject of the impolicy of the British Government refusing to extend the protection of England to the New Hebrides group.

Wellington, 14th June, 1878.

G. GREY.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure in No. 14.

MEMORANDUM *re* NEW HEBRIDES GROUP.

In my opinion it is much to be regretted that the Imperial Government should have refused to extend the protection of England to this group. I do not see how the French Government could interfere. The colonization of New Caledonia has not been very successful, and, were it not for the aid given to the colony by the French Government, it would not, I believe, exist long under its present management. No doubt, if the annexation of the New Hebrides group threatened in any way the existence of New Caledonia, or interfered with its commercial relation, something might be said against the Imperial Government interfering. The Marquis D'Harcourt's letter only states that commercial relations have been established, and that these are rapidly developing; but the trade relations between New South Wales and New Caledonia are far more extensive, and the mere fact of New South Wales being an English colony has not disturbed those relations, nor is it likely to do so.

I think this Government should urge the Imperial Government to reconsider its determination.

22nd May, 1878.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 15.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor the Most Hon. the Marquis of NORMANBY
to the Right Hon. Sir M. E. HICKS BEACH.

(No. 25.)

Government House, Wellington,

SIR,—

New Zealand, 22nd June, 1878.

I have the honor to enclose printed copies of a correspondence which has taken place between Sir George Grey and myself,