

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure in No. 19.

Sir GEORGE GREY to the Right Hon. Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH.

SIR,—

Wellington, New Zealand, 17th January, 1879.

I have had the honor of receiving from the Marquis of Normanby a despatch (No. 45), which you addressed to him on the 26th September last, respecting an alleged agreement between Sir Theophilus Shepstone and Ketchwayo, the King of the Zulus, to attack, under certain circumstances, the late Transvaal Republic.

2. I do not know if you are aware that, since I wrote to Lord Beaconsfield, a statement was published in a South African newspaper in defence of Sir Theophilus Shepstone by a relative of his, which contended that the story was altogether improbable. As well as I remember, there was no absolute denial of the fact. The Zulu authority for the story, in reply, affirmed its correctness, and asked for the examination of certain witnesses, who were named, alleging also other evidences in proof of his assertion.

3. I cannot think that a British officer entering a small republic of Europeans, which had no standing force whatever, and which it was believed he was commissioned to annex to the British dominions, accompanied by a force of twenty-five mounted policemen, part of a most efficient corps, could have been regarded as entering that country upon a friendly mission. If the country was friendly, and the mission friendly, whence the necessity of the force? It is not usual to enter a friendly territory accompanied by an armed force, and the fact of such a thing being done was, I believe, likely to have made a sagacious people think that, though the smallness of the force might tempt resistance, the power of a great empire was behind, and that probably arrangements had been made for the immediate punishment of any attempt that might be made to resist an armed force of that Power, however small such force might be.

4. I am satisfied the circumstances, taken as a whole, will produce a great and lasting impression upon the native mind, and also upon the mind of the European inhabitants of many parts of South Africa, and I remain of opinion that it should be inquired into, and be formally contradicted in some authoritative manner.

5. With regard to your observation, that I ought to forward any communication, of the nature of that which I transmitted to Lord Beaconsfield, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies through the Governor of the colony in which I may be, I beg to state that the constitutional custom pursued for many years has been this: that, when a person who has held high office wishes to make representations to the Government upon any matter of importance in which the honor or welfare of the Empire is, in his belief, concerned, he makes such representations to the Prime Minister, in order that a certainty may exist that the head of the Government has had his attention called to the subject in the exact form in which it is wished to represent it. A reference to the correspondence of former Ministries would show this. Any person acquainted with the correspondence of the Aberdeen Ministry, for instance, would know that, at the breaking out of the Crimean War, letters of the nature I allude to were addressed to the Prime Minister by leading men of the day, and were courteously answered by him. It also would be manifestly wrong that persons residing in a colony should be only permitted to address the Imperial Government through the Governor of that colony, on matters regarding which he could have no knowledge or acquaintance whatever, and which had no relation to the colony of which he was Governor.

6. Out of courtesy to the Marquis of Normanby, I have done myself the honor of transmitting him a copy of this letter.

The Right Hon. Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bart.,

I have, &c.,

G. GREY.

Secretary of State, Colonial Office, Downing Street, London.

No. 20.

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

(No. 5.)

Government House, Wellington,

SIR,—

New Zealand, 14th February, 1879.

I have the honor to inform you that I have made my arrangements for leaving Wellington on Monday, the 17th, and that I take my final departure from New Zealand at the Bluff on the 20th instant. I hope to arrive in Melbourne on the 26th instant.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Sir Michael Hicks Beach.

NORMANBY.