

by the colonies, and, if it be considered that the present is a fitting time, then that such discussion should take the form of putting forward the basis on which a federal government could be constituted.

This Government is also prepared to accede to your request to urge upon the Imperial Government that it is desirable that the question of annexation be reconsidered, and with that view I have addressed a letter inviting His Excellency Lord Augustus Loftus to lay our views before the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and of such letter I beg to hand you a copy.

I have, &c.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary of Queensland, Brisbane.

ALEX. STUART.

No. 10.

Administrator Sir A. H. PALMER, K.C.M.G. to the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Brisbane, August 13, 1883.

I have the honour to enclose for your Lordship's information a letter addressed to me by the Hon. the Premier, covering a memorandum on the refusal of the Imperial Government to confirm the annexation of New Guinea, which has been laid before the Executive Council of Queensland.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

A. H. PALMER.

Enclosure.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Brisbane, August 2, 1883.

A.—3, Sess. I.
p. 67, App. B.

I have the honour to forward to your Excellency, for transmission to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, a copy of an extract from the minutes of proceedings of the Executive Council at a meeting held at Government House on the 17th ultimo, and to request that you will direct Earl Derby's attention especially to the fact that the suggestion made in the first portion of the last paragraph has been enthusiastically responded to by the Australian Colonies; the only exception to their unanimity, that of South Australia, being capable of such explanation as will not be likely to exclude that colony from taking a share in future negotiations on the subject.

With regard to the next suggestion, that Her Majesty's Government should be invited to move in the direction of providing for a form of Federal Government suitable for the Australian Colonies, I think it would be advisable to urge upon the Secretary of State that, if the Imperial Government regard the federation of these colonies as a desirable end, the latter have now arrived at a point in their history more favourable than any occasion that has hitherto presented itself for the promotion of such federal union. The revival of the subject of certain necessary annexations, and the clear recognition that only through federal action can their desires in this direction be carried into effect, have suddenly brought the question of federation, which had hitherto been treated as an abstract speculation, within the range of practical politics, and, together with the almost universal advocacy of the Press, constitute an opportunity of which Her Majesty's Government would do well to take prompt advantage.

I have, &c.

THOMAS McILWRAITH.

No. 11.

Administrator Sir A. H. PALMER, K.C.M.G. to the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Brisbane, October 9, 1883.

A.—3, Sess. I.
p. 89, No. 21.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your despatch of the 11th July last, which I have submitted to my Responsible Advisers.

I now do myself the honour to enclose copies of a communication which I have received from the Premier on the subject. Sir Thomas McIlwraith has gone so fully into this question that it does not appear necessary for me to enlarge upon it. I have, however, to express my entire concurrence in the view taken by him, and my deep regret that the Imperial Government has not seen its way to indorse the action of Queensland.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

A. H. PALMER.

Enclosure.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Brisbane, September 28, 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the despatch addressed to your Excellency by the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated the 11th of July last, containing the refusal of Her Majesty's Government to confirm the recent action of the Government of this colony in taking possession, in Her Majesty's name, of so much of the Island of New Guinea as was not in the possession of any civilized Power.

2. The action of your predecessor, the late Sir Arthur Kennedy, in authorizing the annexation of New Guinea, was taken after due deliberation and several consultations with his Ministers, throughout which he showed himself fully alive to the interests and responsibilities of Her Majesty's Government. Nor were his Ministers behindhand in studying, as far as they possibly could, in connection with the question of annexation, the interests of the Empire generally, as well as those of Queensland. It is therefore with much regret we have received the announcement of the decision referred to, and find that the only result of our appeal is the expression of a hope that "the time is now not distant when, in respect of questions of annexation, the Australian Colonies will effectively