

SIR,—

Royal Colonial Institute, 15, Strand, W.C. December 13, 1882.

I have the honour, on behalf of the Council of the Royal Colonial Institute, to request your attention to an article contained in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of the 27th of November last, recommending the German Government to annex and colonize New Guinea.

On referring to Parliamentary Papers C.—1566 of 1876, you will observe that on the 29th of April, 1875, a large and influential deputation waited on Lord Carnarvon to present a memorial from the Council and Fellows of the Royal Colonial Institute, strongly advocating the annexation of the eastern half of New Guinea by Great Britain. Among the arrangements adduced in favour of such action being taken, one of the most important was, that its possession by any Foreign Power would for many reasons be highly detrimental to British interests. One of the deputation, the Hon. Arthur (now Lord) Kinnaird, remarked that Germany was determined to be a great naval Power, and would look to colonization as the principal means to that end, and if she looked to New Guinea we may lose a very important colony. (Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute, Vol. vi., page 204.)

The Council of the Royal Colonial Institute, still holding the opinion expressed in the memorial referred to, request me to beg that you will draw the attention of your Government to the article, of which I enclose a copy, as it is evident that the proposed action would be most disadvantageous to the interests of the Australasian Colonies.

I have, &c.

FREDERICK YOUNG,

Honorary Secretary.

The Agent-General for Queensland, London.

GERMAN ANNEXATION OF NEW GUINEA.

WE (*Sydney Morning Herald*) have been favoured by the Colonial Secretary with a copy of the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of the 27th November, which contains a long description of New Guinea, and finishes by urging that the island should be annexed by Germany as the foundation of a future German colonial kingdom. We give a summary of the first part of the article:—

“1. New Guinea is a part of the Australian division of the world and of the tropics.

“2. It was neglected on account of the attraction of gold in Australia, and still remains a comparatively unknown land.

“3. New Guinea was explored by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century; in the seventeenth almost exclusively by the Dutch, who seemed better satisfied with the country than other European nations had been, but had already too large a field for their labours (three times the size of the German kingdom) in Java, Sumatra, and Celebes, so that gradually they gave up the larger island.

“4. The explorations of Powell, Moresby, Macfarlane, &c., have made the island now worth some consideration. It is considered useful by geological and biological people as holding in its forests the key to solve problems—by London missionaries as a field to win new souls—by better informed colonial politicians of all nations as a profitable field for cultivation; therefore geographical inquiries about it are now little likely to come to a standstill. As we Germans have learnt a little about conducting colonial policy, and as our wishes and plans turn with a certain vivacity towards New Guinea, here is a short *résumé* of the geographical knowledge of others.

“5. Physical geography may well be in doubt whether New Guinea, which is more than half the size of Germany in extent, belongs to the Asiatic island world or to the Australian. No doubt the island forms a sort of connecting link between these two so remarkably different regions of the earth.

“6. On closer survey it is not cut off so roughly from Asia as Wallace originally thought. The principal axis of the island is directed, just like Sumatra's, to the south-east, as also the mountain chains, whereas in New Holland the direction is meridional. Also with respect to height, the New Guinea mountain chains seem to belong to the same date as those of Sunda and Asia. If the two-mile-high Hercules Hill of Lawson belongs to the category of imagination, yet the summits of the south-east half-island attain tremendous heights; and quite on the northern edge, behind low foreground hills, there rise Alpine heights, one nearly three thousand metres high. It can scarcely be doubted that the central ridges—the Charles, Louis, and Victor Emmanuel Mountains—which by European explorers have only been touched on their southern point, will be found to be considerably higher. Through this we may, perhaps, account for the strong descent and the waterfalls which the Fly River already has in its upper course.

“7. As in the Sunda and Philippine Islands, volcanic agency seems to have had an important share in the formation of the surface of the island. Numerous mountains show just as rounded a form as Mount Junghahns in Java. In the immediate neighbourhood of the north coast an island volcano burst forth into eruption just in sight of Miklouho-Maclay (the explorer), and the frequent earthquakes are best explained by the active volcanic agency of New Guinea. The sedimentary formations also seem, as far as known, to be allied to those of the Moluccas and Sunda Islands. The lime rocks of younger formation especially, which are characteristic of the north-west island, Papua-Onim, seem strongly to correspond with those of the so-called Asiatic islands; and the other sandstone formations, which form the predominant stone in the north of New Holland, take their place in the south-east of New Guinea, only very gradually.

“8. That the world of New Guinea organism does not leave so sharp a line of division between New Guinea and India as Alfred Russell Wallace wished to draw, Rosenberg first proved, and the inquiries of Raffray, Beccari, D'Albertis, &c., seem to result in the same, although the reports of the inquiry as to this question are as yet by no means finished. Undoubtedly the kingdom of Indian plants and animal forms is in New Guinea a very marked one, and when we survey the world of organism of the large island with the practical eye of the merchant, cultivator, and colonial politician—when we reflect that the nutmeg tree, sago and cocoa palms, jute plant, sandalwood, ironwood, ebony, and yams form the most important plants in a commercial point of view, we especially think of India. That the different Indian cultivation plants, before all the coffee and cinchona trees and tobacco, would find a particularly favourable soil in New Guinea, is also not to be doubted. Also,