

Guinea become one of the Australian Colonies. As to the commercial advantages to arise from annexation, I do not think they would be of much importance for many years, as, except sugar and cotton (which could only be cultivated to a limited extent), it does not appear to me that New Guinea produces naturally anything which would form the basis of extensive barter with the white man. But no doubt many reasons may be urged in favour of annexation besides those of commercial benefits, which space will not allow me to discuss here, even if I were competent to do so.

I should strongly advise that the Australian Colonies should send some competent man to report on New Guinea, as, whether annexed or not, it would be most desirable that the colonies should have thoroughly reliable information about that country. If Mr. Thurston, of Fiji, could be induced to go, I am satisfied that a more competent man could not be found; or Mr. Thurston might be able to recommend some one.

I made a careful search for auriferous deposits, but found but slight traces of such existing. Any one prospecting for gold must do so from April to November, or will be greatly impeded by the rains. The natives have no gold ornaments, and appear to be ignorant of what gold is.

In conclusion, I may state that the natives keep their villages clean, build their houses substantially and with some taste, and have a regular system of cultivation. The staple food is sago, yams, and bananas. Smoking is practised by men, women, and children. The tribes of natives differ considerably in character, some being fierce and warlike, whilst others appear comparatively gentle and peaceful.

I must apologise for occupying so much space in your journal, and I must ask the kind consideration of my readers, as the above has necessarily been compiled in great haste.

I am, &c.

JOHN CAMERON,
Geodetic Surveyor.

Pfahler's Hotel, Sydney, November 21.

No. 35.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the ABERDEEN CHAMBER of COMMERCE.

SIR,—

Downing Street, December 8, 1883.

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, forwarding a memorial from the Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce with reference to the question of the annexation of New Guinea.

Lord Derby desires me to state, in reply, that the Chamber may be assured Her Majesty's Government will not fail to consider carefully the resolutions recently passed by the Intercolonial Convention now assembled at Sydney.

I am, &c.

The Secretary of the Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce.

JOHN BRAMSTON.

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1884.