

the enlisting of native labourers, and to come to an agreement to this effect with the Imperial Government."

Enclosure 2.

[Extract from the *Times*, Friday, 5th February, 1886.]

THE NEW HEBRIDES.

To the Editor of the *Times*.

SIR,—With reference to the protocol said, in your Berlin correspondence of yesterday, to have been concluded on the 24th December between the French and German Governments, by which Germany agrees to recognize the eventual occupation of the New Hebrides by France, I beg to state that I have just received a telegraphic despatch from the Hon. James Service, Premier of Victoria and President of the Federal Council of Australasia, now sitting at Hobart, stating that the question is under the consideration of the Council, and that it is proposed to address Her Majesty on the subject without delay.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT MURRAY SMITH,
Agent-General for Victoria.

Victoria Office, Westminster, 4th February.

Enclosure 3.

[Extract from the *Times*, Saturday, 6th February, 1886.]

OCEANIA.

Paris, 5th February.

THE new German White Book, which has been summarized by the Berlin correspondent of the *Times*, states that Germany has undertaken to do nothing to hinder the eventual taking possession by France of the "Îles sous le Vent en Océanie," connected with the Archipelago of Tahiti, or the Society Islands. It is natural to inquire by what right Germany empowers France to take possession of these isles, and on what principle France accepts such a right, seeing that she expressly renounced it in 1847. It is true that in 1880, on the complaint of some German merchants, Germany made a show of intending to annex this group. It is also true that in the same year the preface to the Bill ratifying the cession of the Society Islands and their dependencies by King Pomare V. to France contained this passage: "The efforts made by the Powers to obtain possessions in these waters seem to the French Government to make it indispensable to take measures calculated to strengthen our position in these archipelagos. These incidents, moreover, derived a special significance from the scheme for cutting the Isthmus of Panama, the execution of which must singularly increase the importance of the Oceanian isles situated along the line of this route from America to Australia."

But it appears, unless since then new arrangements have been made which modify the previous settlement, that the treaty, of which the text is sent herewith, is absolute and formal, and that Germany can neither grant nor France accept any right of possession whatever over the Îles sous le Vent in Oceania. I hasten to call attention to this treaty before the French Chamber proceeds to legislate on the Franco-German Convention. For if it be still in force it should be made known in time to prevent a difficulty from being raised unnecessarily; and if it has ceased to be in force the fact should be stated, so that no doubt may remain in the minds of those who remember the negotiation. The treaty is as follows: "Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and His Majesty the King of the French, desiring to put aside a cause of discussion between their respective Governments on the subject of the islands of the Pacific Ocean described below, have thought it right to bind themselves reciprocally as follows: (1.) To recognize formally the independence of the Islands of Huaheine, Raiatea, and Borabora, to windward of Tahiti, and of the small adjacent islands dependent on the latter. (2.) Never to take possession of the said islands, or of one or more of them, either absolutely, under the title of a protectorate, or under any form whatever. (3.) Never to recognize that one chief or prince of Tahiti may at the same time reign over one or several of the islands mentioned below, or that one chief or prince reigning in one or several of the latter may at the same time reign at Tahiti, the reciprocal independence of the islands above described and of the Island of Tahiti and its dependencies being accepted in principle. The undersigned, Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Her Britannic Majesty and the Minister Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the King of the French at the Court of London, provided with the necessary powers, declare, in consequence hereby, that their said Majesties reciprocally enter into this agreement."

If this treaty, signed on the 19th June, 1847, by M. de Jarnac and Lord Palmerston, still holds good, Germany has made no great sacrifice by the concession just accorded to France.

Enclosure 4.

[Extract from the *Times*, Monday, 8th February, 1886.]

THE NEW HEBRIDES.

Melbourne, 6th February.

PUBLIC attention is much occupied with the Franco-German agreement mentioned in the last German White Book, whereby Germany undertakes to do nothing to hinder the eventual taking possession by France of the New Hebrides.

The Victorian Government has telegraphed to Mr. Murray Smith, its Agent-General in London, for further information on the subject, at the same time pointing out the necessity of representations to France in order to obtain renewed assurances from that country of non-intervention in the New Hebrides.