

No. 3.

The PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

ACT with Agents-General protesting against New Hebrides being given to France.
13th February, 1886.

ROBERT STOUT

No. 4.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER

HEBRIDES. Agents-General arranged yesterday act together interview Granville.
13th February, 1886.

F. D. BELL.

No. 5.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 20th February, 1886.

No. 3. SIR,—

I received in due course your telegram of the 13th instant, directing me to act with the other Agents-General in protesting against the New Hebrides being given to France; and I replied that there had been a meeting of the Agents-General the day before, when it was agreed to ask Lord Granville for an interview, and when the general line to be taken on that occasion was settled.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 6.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 24th February, 1886.

SIR,—

The interview with Earl Granville on the subject of the New Hebrides, which, I informed you in my letter of the 12th instant, had been asked for by the Agents-General, took place yesterday. We had the satisfaction of being accompanied by the High Commissioner of Canada; the Dominion Government, which has now become as much a Pacific as an Atlantic Power, desiring to associate itself with Australasia in all that relates to the future of the Pacific Islands.

My colleagues did me the honour, once more, of asking me to present our case to Lord Granville. I was fortunate enough to receive their unanimous approval in my endeavour to give our story clearly, and Lord Granville was also pleased to state, in the reply he made to us, that he himself agreed with every word I had said.

I regret that it has not been possible for me to prepare notes of what passed, in time to send you by this mail, as they have to be verified by my colleagues; but this will be done without delay. In the meantime, Lord Granville having desired us to communicate with our Governments confidentially upon a proposal just made by the French Ambassador to Lord Rosebery respecting the New Hebrides, we asked the Agent-General for Victoria to send a joint circular telegram, copy of which I have now the honour to transmit herewith.

A question was put in the House of Commons respecting the New Hebrides two nights ago by Mr. Baden-Powell. I annex a *Times* report of the question, and of the reply of Mr. Bryce, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure.

[Extract from the *Times*, Tuesday, 23rd February, 1886.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MONDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY.—THE NEW HEBRIDES.

MR. BADEN-POWELL asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a question with reference to the independence of the New Hebrides and of Raiatea, and particularly as to the convention recently entered into by Germany and France, whereby Germany concedes to France the right to take possession of these territories.

MR. BRYCE.—Agreements do exist between Great Britain and France whereby both Powers engage to respect the independence of the groups of islands referred to; but a conditional arrangement has been entered into with France in relation to the Raiatea group, securing full advantages to British commerce. Her Majesty's Government are aware of the convention between Germany and France alluded to by the honourable member, but it is not to the effect stated. It does not affect the agreement between Great Britain and France, but merely stipulates that Germany will do nothing to hinder France from eventually obtaining the islands in question. Under these circumstances Her Majesty's Government did not receive, and did not expect to receive, notice of such convention, nor to be invited to take part in it. The Australian Colonies continue to object to the abandonment of the agreement with France concerning the New Hebrides, and correspondence is passing on the subject with the Colonial Governments.

No. 7.

The PREMIER, Victoria, to the PREMIER, New Zealand.

I HAVE received the following very important telegram from the Agents-General, and forward it to you: "*Secret and Confidential*: Had an interview with Secretary of State for the Colonies. All