

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

ANNEXATION OF THE KERMADEC ISLANDS

(PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE).

Presented to both Houses by Message.

WM. F. DRUMMOND JERVOIS, Governor.

Message No. 2.

THE Governor forwards herewith, for the consideration of the Legislative Council and the House of Representatives, copy of a despatch received from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies respecting the proposed annexation of the Kermadec Islands to New Zealand.

Government House,
Wellington, 4th June, 1886.

SIR,—
Downing Street, 7th April, 1886. New Zealand,
With reference to that part of the memorandum from your Government which was No. 24.
enclosed in your Despatch No. 121, of the 18th November last, in which it is urged that the A.—1, 1886,
Kermadec Islands should be declared part of the Colony of New Zealand, I have the honour to No. 10.
transmit to you, for the consideration of your Government, copies of letters from the Admiralty and Feb. 13.
Foreign Office on this subject. Feb. 17.

Her Majesty's Government are prepared to annex the Kermadec Islands to New Zealand; and as a first step Lord Granville will request the Admiralty to issue instructions directing the Admiral on the Australian Station to hoist the British flag on the islands, and to proclaim the Queen's sovereignty.

When the New Zealand Parliament has adopted a joint address praying for the annexation of the islands to New Zealand, steps will be taken for issuing the necessary Letters Patent for that purpose.

The other matters referred to in the memorandum accompanying your despatch are engaging the attention of Her Majesty's Government; but, as regards the Pelew Islands, you are no doubt aware that the sovereignty of Spain has been extended over this group.

Governor Sir W. F. D. Jervois, G.C.M.G., C.B., &c.

I have, &c.,
GRANVILLE.

The ADMIRALTY to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

SIR,—
Admiralty, 13th February, 1886. M. 246.
I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, enclosing an extract from a memorandum by the Government of New Zealand, recommending that the Kermadec Islands should be annexed to the colony, and requesting to be informed whether my Lords are aware of any objection to the proposal, and whether the records of the Admiralty contain any information respecting these islands.

In reply, I am to request that you will state to Earl Granville that my Lords see no particular objection to the annexation of these islands or islets by New Zealand if that Government wishes it, but my Lords cannot imagine any possible use, commercial or military, which they can be to that colony, except, perhaps, for some small and unimportant deposit of guano.

The Kermadec group are four in number, lying about six hundred miles north-east from Auckland, and some two hundred and fifty miles east of a direct line from Auckland to Fiji. Three are very small—mere high rock islets. The fourth, Raoul or Sunday Island, is a volcanic island, 1,680ft. high, well wooded, and about twelve miles in circumference. The islands are all far apart from one another. There are three open roadsteads at Raoul Island, which can be used according to the direction of the wind, which is variable. Landing is never good. When Captain Belcher surveyed Raoul Island in 1854 one American family was settled upon it; but it is believed now to be uninhabited, volcanic eruptions having caused it to be abandoned. Dangerous sunken rocks lie (and more are reported) at different points to the south-west up to one hundred miles' distance. Her Majesty's ships seldom visit the group.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

I have, &c.,
EVAN MACGREGOR.