

mous surrender on the New Guinea question. Mr. J. A. Froude was in Melbourne when the exasperation was at its height, and in the pages of "Oceana" he has placed on record his deep sense of the dangerously-excited state of Australian feeling at the time. He would be a bold Minister who would resolve on repeating Lord Derby's risky experiment, for, in doing so, he would be plainly precipitating a crisis between the colonies and the Mother-country. The fact is—and the sooner it is practically recognised the better—that the Australians are the people whose interests and sentiments must be considered first and foremost in the settlement of this question, for it is they, and they alone, who are directly affected by the ultimate disposal of the New Hebrides, and who will have to suffer all the painful consequences should an irretrievable mistake be made by the Colonial Office in London. If only both England and France could acquire some adequate appreciation of the strength of Australian native sentiment with respect to foreign aggression in the Pacific, all these needlessly protracted diplomatic negotiations would speedily terminate, and both countries would see the propriety of rigidly respecting the provisions of the existing treaty and regarding the New Hebrides for the future as neutral territory.

I am, &c.,

24th August.

J. F. HOGAN (of Melbourne, Australia).

[Extract from the *Standard*, Friday, 26th August, 1887.]

THE NEW HEBRIDES.

(From our Correspondent.)

Paris, Thursday night.

THE *Pays* claims to have received advices from London mentioning the report that the English and French Governments have come to an understanding over the New Hebrides question, and that as soon as M. Waddington returns from attending the General Council of the Aisne an exchange of signatures will take place. This journal adds,—

"Among the numerous suggestions examined, the French Government chose a sort of condominium, perhaps contrary to our wishes. The naval divisions of the two countries stationed in the Pacific will therefore be charged with the police of the Archipelago. How they will carry out the task no one can say; but we may anticipate a continual source of conflict from the arrangement. It goes without saying that the marine infantry we landed for the protection of our countrymen at Port Sandwich and Port Habannah will evacuate these ports, which by right are French ground; and our flag, which was hoisted there, will be hauled down in obedience to the yelping of the Australian Colonies."

[Extract from the *St. James's Gazette*, Thursday, 25th August, 1887.]

THE NEW HEBRIDES AND NICKEL.

A CORRESPONDENT, who has access to exceedingly good information on the subject with which he deals, sends us the following remarks:—

If we remember that the new French colonial policy, which has been industriously pursued since 1880, if political in its origin, has been largely financial and commercial in its subsequent development, and if we also recollect that the New Hebrides contain valuable mines of nickel, we need be the less astonished at the pertinacity with which the French pursue their claims to the islands. In the light of these considerations, and of M. Flourens's recent audacious despatch, in which Egypt and the New Hebrides were skilfully and cynically treated together, it is quite worth our while to bestow a little attention upon the long and exhaustive letter published in the *Temps* the other day by M. John Higginson, and addressed to, of all people in the world, Sir Charles Dilke. The letter shows that the meaning of "Les Nouvelles Hébrides" is Nickel—as the meaning of Egypt is Suez and the Nile; and M. Higginson, a naturalised Frenchman born a Scot, is Lesseps and Taillandier and *Le Bosphore Egyptien* rolled into one! M. Higginson represents Nickel, since he has, or had till recently, the chief interest in the mines in the New Hebrides.

M. Flourens was quite justified in connecting the Egyptian and Hebridean questions as he did; for, in the first place, it gave him the occasion of exercising his playfully ironical wit upon an English Cabinet in a manner rarely attempted before, and in the next it established a basis of negotiation between the two Foreign Offices in London and Paris that must have much pleased the Russians, whose Envoy so warmly protected his French colleague at Constantinople. M. Flourens is a very able man—the only approach to a diplomatist that the French Republic has had to show; but his despatch would have been a great imprudence if England had not previously proved how much she could bear. M. Flourens's bantering having been submitted to, M. Higginson, after waiting to see what would happen, comes down upon the public with several columns of close print, in which he proclaims authoritatively the doctrine of the French presence in the New Hebrides. When I say authoritatively, I do not speak too strongly; for those who ought to know affirm that this important document was revised by M. Flourens himself. The article itself is a declaration of right—a reversal of all the pretences put forth by the French Government for more than four years and accepted by us as genuine. It copies the language used by Government organs since M. Flourens came into office, and the expressions invariably employed as to the "rights" of France in Egypt, and distinctly asserts the rule of France in the New Hebrides, not only as a matter of fact but as a matter of law deriving directly and indisputably from the occupation of New Caledonia. Because New Caledonia is French, therefore is the Hebridean territory French also: such is the new doctrine. At the end of his *plaidoirie* M. Higginson offers a plan of "arrangement" to the English Government (and Australian people) very much in the tone that the German Chancellor might adopt if he were suggesting to France some possible compensation for Alsace-Lorraine!

Meanwhile, just on the eve of the prorogation of Parliament, M. Rouvier, as President of the Council, obtains the agreement of the Cabinet to the adoption of nickel as the substitute for copper