

page 136, vol. 2, of "Proceedings of the Colonial Conference") "that the territory when annexed must be taken to have been acquired by settlement and not by conquest or cession;" and whether they really intend to treat the territory as settled by Her Majesty's subjects and to constitute a "British settlement," so as to render applicable Act 23 and 24 Vict., cap. 121, of the new British Settlements Act in case that should be passed into law.

Sir H. HOLLAND.—The honourable member has correctly stated the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, who in such a matter are guided by the opinion of the law advisers. There is no doubt that the territory of British New Guinea, over which it is intended to proclaim the Queen's sovereignty, comes fully within the terms of section 1 of the Act 23 and 24 Vict., cap. 121. As a matter of fact for a long time past missionary, trading, and other settlements have been made on the coast of New Guinea, and in some cases have been maintained, and, as I previously stated, any delay in establishing the Queen's sovereignty in British New Guinea would tend to cause great injury to the natives. I may add that the British Settlements Bill gives no further powers to Her Majesty as to administration than she possesses under existing Acts.

In reply to a further question,

Sir H. HOLLAND said,—The honourable baronet had clearly blocked the Bill named under an evident misapprehension; it had really to do with New Guinea, and he therefore hoped the block would be removed.

[Extract from the *Times*, Wednesday, 7th September, 1887.]

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

The House then went into Committee of Supply on the Civil Service votes.

Sir G. CAMPBELL moved a reduction under subhead "M" of £250, being part of the salary of the Deputy-Commissioner of New Guinea. He did so for the purpose of calling attention to the policy which was being pursued with regard to New Guinea. To that policy he very much objected. He complained that Queensland had been allowed to have its own way in the matter of territory, and to bully this country. As to New Guinea, the colony was very cautious. It was a question with them, "Heads, I win; tails, you lose." The colony had carefully limited the amount it was to contribute, and it was made quite clear that if the £15,000 was not sufficient the deficit would have to be made good by the British taxpayer. He quoted the opinion of the late Colonial Secretary, who had stated that £15,000 would not be sufficient. He maintained that under the present law we had no power to annex the territory to Queensland.

Sir H. HOLLAND said the law advisers said there was no doubt about the matter.

Sir G. CAMPBELL said that Her Majesty's law advisers gave the opinion that the territories when annexed must be taken to have been acquired, as distinguished from conquest and cession. If the law advisers were so confident that under the present law we were entitled to treat the territory as a British settlement, why had the Government placed such an unnatural definition in their British Settlement Bill at present before Parliament? In his view, Her Majesty's Government were not entitled under the existing law to treat New Guinea as a British settlement, to annex it, and to deal with it under that title. In support of this contention, he cited the Falkland Islands law, and remarked that in no sense could it be said that this great, unknown, and unexplored territory was really a British settlement. It was a fiction, and the perversion of a plain meaning contained in the statute. But, whether the annexation be legal or illegal, as a matter of expediency he should not object to what he might call a nominal annexation, which should enable the Government to assume jurisdiction along the coast in order to keep off marauding foreigners and to protect the native tribes. But the Government were departing from that principle, and were inflicting the grossest injustice on the natives by handing over the control of this colony to Queensland. The proper course to pursue was that recommended by Sir Peter Scratchley when he said that New Guinea must be governed for the natives by the natives. ("Hear, hear," from Sir H. Holland.) He was delighted to hear the right honourable gentleman assent to that view; but in his view the right honourable gentleman was not going to take the course recommended. The right honourable gentleman was going to basely surrender the natives whom he ought to protect to the Government of Queensland, and to appoint an administrator, who was to be under the orders of the Executive Government of Queensland. He believed the Government had departed from the principle of governing New Guinea on the principle he so much desired to see adopted, and which the Colonial Secretary seemed to approve—by the natives for the natives. He moved the reduction of the vote by £250 as part of the salary of Deputy Commissioner for New Guinea.

Sir H. HOLLAND said the honourable member had repeated about twenty times that the Government were going to hand over New Guinea to Queensland: indeed, the whole of the honourable gentleman's argument was based on that assumption. The whole of the honourable gentleman's argument from beginning to end was incorrect. The Government were not going to hand over New Guinea to Queensland. Any one who took the trouble to read the discussion on, as well as the schedule of, the Queensland Bill, which provided for the expenses of the government of British New Guinea, must see that this country kept New Guinea entirely in its own hands. There was really no foundation for the contention of the honourable member that we were practically going to hand over New Guinea to Queensland. It would not be unnatural that the Australasian colonies should desire to see in British hands the land on the other side of the Straits; but the feeling was not confined to Queensland as to the desirableness of claiming sovereignty over New Guinea. The feeling was universally felt throughout the colonies of Australia, and with the exception of South Australia they were all subscribing towards the expenses of New Guinea. Therefore the honourable member was wrong when he assumed that Queensland alone was interested in New Guinea. It was by no means clear that the other Australasian colonies would be prepared, even if Queensland desired it, to see New Guinea handed over to Queensland. The honourable member had thought fit to go back to the very old com-