

SIR,—

Wellington Terrace, Wellington, 21st February, 1900.

In order to forestall any further crawling officiousness and malignity on the part of the Dunedin *Star* man, I beg to inform you that an article of mine on the Samoan question appeared in the *New York Times* of 25th December, 1899.

I have now the honour to forward the subjoined extracts for your information.

I remain, &c.,

The Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, Premier.

J. GRATTAN GREY.

[From the *New York Times*, 24th December, 1899.]

"No more unwelcome tidings could have been wafted to Australasia than that Great Britain had come to an arrangement with Germany to hand over to that power the control and management of the lion's share of Samoa. The transfer has occurred at a time when there is little disposition to call into question the wisdom of Great Britain in surrendering Samoa without previously taking the colonies into her confidence on the question. The outbreak of the Transvaal War has brought with it a tidal wave of Imperialism all over the Colonies of Australasia, and the feeling is so intense that, for a moment, the colonists generally are blind to the danger of having a great European power like Germany brought into such close proximity to their shores. Had the proposal been put before them in a time of peace, there would have been a howl of indignation from all the British dependencies in these seas, and a stubborn diplomatic effort to prevent Germany from obtaining the foothold she has gained in Samoa.

Powerless as the colonies are now, without any hope of getting the thing undone, a strong undercurrent of feeling prevails that Great Britain has not treated the Australian Colonies as she ought to have done, and this sense of injustice will become intensified with the restoration of peace and a more thorough realisation of the dangers to which Germany's presence as a close and powerful neighbour exposes us. It is well known that Germany's interference in Samoan affairs has always been repugnant to the wishes of the majority of the inhabitants of that country, and no less to Australasians, whose chief desire has ever been to keep foreign European control out of the Southern Pacific as much as possible. To this end resistance has always been offered against the acquisition of the New Hebrides by France, and, in spite of this, Samoa has been quietly surrendered to Germany as an expedient of British policy to cultivate the friendship of that nation in a fleeting emergency.

The only atom of consolation we can discover in the arrangement is that Tutuila is to be American, and that an alliance between the two great English-speaking nations of the world can at any time minimise the dangers arising from such an undesirable Germanic proximity to our coasts. One immediate effect of the handing over of Samoa to Germany will be this: it will impress the colonies with the necessity of inaugurating and gradually perfecting a combined system of defence on land and sea, as well for internal safety as for the protection of their commerce with the outside world, and the insuring of a greater influence in the councils of the Mother-land."

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