

No. 52.

COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Hon. Earl GRANVILLE, K.G., to Governor
Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G.

(Circular.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 5th March, 1870.

I have to inform you that the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury have sanctioned the insertion in the Estimates of the ensuing year of the sum of £1,000 as a contribution from the Imperial Government towards the maintenance of the Settlement at Somerset, in Queensland, which was established in 1863 for the rescue and relief of the crews of ships wrecked in Torres Straits. The sum of £5,000 was voted by the Imperial Parliament in that year for the erection of the buildings, and the station has latterly been maintained by the Colony of Queensland, which, however, is no longer able to do so without aid.

Their Lordships, in acceding to this vote of £1,000, have stated that they would not feel themselves justified in consenting to a renewed grant of this amount until they are informed of the extent of any contribution towards it which the other Australian Colonies might be willing to make.

I request that you will bring the subject under the notice of your Government, and ascertain whether they are willing to make a reasonable contribution towards the maintenance of an establishment which is valuable as a means of saving life and property to the commerce of the Australian Colonies generally, as well as to that of this country, and in the support of which the Colony of Queensland, which will continue to contribute liberally, has, looking to the limited amount of its shipping, a comparatively small direct interest.

I have requested the Governor of Queensland to forward a return, if it can be furnished, showing the number of ships estimated to pass Cape York in the course of the year, the nationality of their owners, and the number which may have been lost in the Straits since the establishment of the settlement.

The information thus asked for would appear to suggest a general principle upon which the proportions of the expense to be distributed among the Colonies might be estimated; but your Government will probably be prepared to enter upon the consideration of the proposal now made to them without waiting for, and without reference to, a computation of the exact degree in which the shipping of each Colony is interested in the question.

The station is provided in the interests of humanity and for the benefit of the whole world, and the present case is not one in which a Government admitting itself fairly liable to contribute would probably desire to measure its assistance by any close calculation of the immediate advantages to be derived by it.

I have, &c.,

Governor Sir G. F. Bowen, G.C.M.G.

GRANVILLE.

No. 53.

COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Hon. Earl GRANVILLE, K.G., to Governor
Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G.

(Circular.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 7th April, 1870.

I transmit to you for information, copies of a correspondence which has passed between the Chairman of the British Australian Telegraph Company and this Department.

You will observe that this Company is desirous of acquiring suitable accommodation at Singapore and at Port Darwin, and also requests permission to erect Land Lines from that Port to Burketown, so as to connect the Company's Cable with the overland Telegraph System of the other Australian Colonies.

From the reply which has been returned to Lord Monck, you will learn the conditions on which Her Majesty's Government is prepared to assist telegraphic enterprise in connection with the Crown Colonies, and you will perceive that as regards the Colonies with Responsible Government, it has been suggested to his Lordship that he should make direct application to the Local Governments.

The Officer Administering the
Government of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

GRANVILLE.