

## No. 19.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the FOREIGN OFFICE.

SIR,—

Downing Street, December 15, 1883.

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you, for the information of Earl Granville, printed copies of the telegrams which have passed between his Lordship and the Governor of New South Wales, relative to New Guinea, and the resolutions of the Intercolonial Convention. Lord Derby is considering what action he shall recommend Her Majesty's Government to take with regard to each of the resolutions reported in Lord Augustus Loftus's telegram of the 5th December, and the only one of those resolutions to which Lord Derby would call Lord Granville's special attention at this moment is the sixth. It seems desirable to communicate this resolution to Lord Lyons without delay, in order that he may understand the feeling of the colonies with respect to the Bill which has formed the subject of previous correspondence, and may avail himself of every opportunity of explaining to the French Government the intensity of that feeling.

I am, &amp;c.

The Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office.

R. H. MEADE.

## No. 20.

The FOREIGN OFFICE to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

SIR,—

Foreign Office, December 27, 1883.

With reference to your letter of the 5th instant, I am directed by Earl Granville to No. 14. transmit to you, to be laid before Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, copy of a despatch which has been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, enclosing copy of a note addressed to the French Government, expressing the hope, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, that no material increase may be made in the number of criminals to be sent to New Caledonia under the provisions of the Bill relative to relapsed criminals, and remonstrating against an application to that colony of the Relapsed Criminals Bill passed by the French Chamber of Deputies.

I am, &amp;c.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

J. PAUNCEFOTE.

## Enclosure.

MY LORD,—

Paris, December 20, 1883.

I have this morning had the honour to receive your Lordship's Despatch (No. 1,241) of the 18th instant, directing me to make an appeal to the French Government against any material increase in the numbers of convicts sent to New Caledonia, and particularly against an application to that colony of the Relapsed Criminals Bill, passed by the French Chamber of Deputies. I enclose a copy of a note which I have addressed, in consequence, to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &amp;c.

The Earl Granville, K.G.

LYONS.

## Sub-Enclosure.

M. LE PRÉSIDENT DU CONSEIL,—

Paris, December 20, 1883.

I did not fail to communicate to Her Majesty's Government the note which your Excellency did me the honour to address to me on the 1st instant, in answer to the representations which had been made by their order to the French Government respecting the apprehensions excited in Her Majesty's Australian Colonies by the Bill for the transportation of relapsed criminals which has been passed by the Chamber of Deputies, and is now before the Senate.

The agitation which is growing up, both in the Australian Colonies and New Zealand, is so great and the alarm felt there so intense, and to all appearances so well founded, that Her Majesty's Government cannot refrain from making another appeal to the French Government on a subject so important in its relations to Great Britain and to some of her most considerable colonies.

Her Majesty's Government desire to represent very seriously to the French Government the danger to the neighbouring British colonies which would be the consequence of any material increase in the number of convicts sent to the existing penal settlement in New Caledonia. They would wish to direct, with still more earnestness, the attention of the French Government to the evils which would be brought upon these colonies if relapsed criminals should be sent to New Caledonia, and should be allowed in that island an amount of liberty not hitherto conceded to those now under penal servitude there.

Her Majesty's Government would point out that this liberty, in the opinion of those best acquainted with the circumstances of the Australian Colonies and the neighbouring countries, would inevitably lead to a wide dispersion of a French convict population among islands not under French authority, whence it would migrate to the Australian continent. Having regard, moreover, to the very numerous cases in which convicts have, during recent years, escaped from New Caledonia to British colonies, Her Majesty's Government cannot but ask, as a question of friendship, that no increase may be made in the numbers sent to that island. And, considering the nature of the provisions of the Bill relative to relapsed criminals, and the manner in which, as would appear from explanations publicly given, it is contemplated that those provisions shall be carried out, Her Majesty's Government feel bound to express their strong hope that the position of the British possessions in relation to New Caledonia will be considered, and that the Bill will not be applied to that colony.

I have, &amp;c.

His Excellency M. J. Ferry.

LYONS.