

The minutes having been read,—

The President laid upon the Table the undermentioned papers, which were ordered to be printed :—

- (1.) From the Superintendent of the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Co. (Limited), stating that Mr. W. Gregor Taylor, the General Manager of the Company, was on his way to Sydney from Singapore, for the purpose of placing himself in communication with the Members of the Conference, on the subject of proposed reduction of Telegraph charges to Europe.
- (2.) From Messrs. Leefe, Langton, and others, on behalf of the European inhabitants of Fiji.

Mr. Whittaker laid before the Convention, for the purpose of being printed, certain amendments which he proposed to move in the Resolutions arrived at by the Committee, and submitted at the last meeting.

THIS Convention, representing the Governments of all the British Colonies of Australasia, having had under its consideration the correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Agents-General of several of those Colonies, relative to the annexation or protectorate of the Western Pacific Islands and the Eastern portion of New Guinea, unanimously resolves :—

1. That further acquisition of dominion in the Western Pacific, south of the Equator, by any Foreign Power, would be highly detrimental to the safety and well-being of the British possessions in Australasia, and injurious to the interests of the Empire.
2. That this Convention respectfully suggests that its object may be effectually attained in respect of the islands not connected by treaty or otherwise with Foreign Powers, by a cession, annexation, or protectorate, as may be most suitable in each case.
3. That this Convention has no desire to impose undue burthens either upon Great Britain or Australasia by any attempt to colonize or settle any of these islands, and therefore proposes to limit occupation to such an extent only as will be sufficient to prevent interference by Foreign Powers, and will enable Her Majesty's Imperial Government to establish a jurisdiction, by Orders in Council similar to those now in operation under the Western Pacific Orders, but applicable alike to the subjects of Foreign nations as well as British subjects.
4. That, having regard to the geographical position of the island of New Guinea, the rapid extension of British trade and enterprise in Torres Straits, the certainty that the island will shortly be overrun by many adventurous subjects of Great Britain and other nations, and the inadequacy of any existing laws for regulating their relations with the native tribes, this Convention emphatically expresses its opinion that such steps should be immediately taken as will most conveniently and effectively secure the incorporation with the British Empire of so much of New Guinea, and of the small islands adjacent to and dependent thereon, as are not claimed by the Government of Holland.
5. That although the understanding arrived at in 1878 between Great Britain and France, recognizing the independence of the New Hebrides, precludes this Convention from making any recommendation with respect to those islands inconsistent with that understanding, the Convention urges upon Her Majesty's Government the extreme desirability that such understanding should be embodied in some definite and permanent engagement, which shall secure them against falling under any foreign dominion; at the same time the Convention trusts that Her Majesty's Government will avail itself of any opportunity that may arise for negotiating with the Government of France, with the object of securing the control of those islands in the interests of Australasia.
6. That the Convention protests in the strongest manner against the declared intention of the Government of France to transport large numbers of relapsed criminals to the French possessions in the Pacific, and urges Her Majesty's Government to use every means in its power to prevent the adoption of a course so disastrous to the interests of Australasia and of the Pacific Islands.
7. That the Convention expresses a confident hope that no penal settlement for the reception of European criminals will long continue to exist in the Pacific; and invites Her Majesty's Government to make to the Government of France such serious representations on this subject as may be deemed expedient.
8. That the Colonies of Australasia do not seek to evade any responsibilities that fairly attach to them; and this Convention is of opinion that, having regard to the relative interests of Great Britain and Australasia, such share of the cost to be incurred by the Imperial Government, in giving effect to the above resolutions as that Government shall deem fair and reasonable, should be secured to Great Britain by an "effective guarantee," in the form of permanent Appropriation Acts by the several Colonial Parliaments, such share to be from time to time contributed by the several Colonies, in proportion to population.
9. Finally, this Convention desires to place on record that it recognizes that the responsibility of extending the boundaries of the British Empire rests with the Imperial Government; and that it has no intention or desire to press anything which may tend to place that Government in a position of hostility towards any Foreign Power.
10. That these resolutions be communicated to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to be submitted for Her Majesty's Royal consideration, with a view to such action as Her Majesty may think proper to direct, to give effect to the earnest desire of her loyal subjects in Australasia.

The Convention then resumed consideration of the Resolutions proposed by Mr. Griffith on the subject of federation, when after discussion, the following amended Resolutions were proposed by Mr. Griffith and unanimously adopted :—

1. That a Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the best mode of constituting a Federal Australasian Council, and the definition of its functions and authority.
2. That such Committee consist of His Excellency Sir G. William Des Vœux, K.C.M.G., Messrs. Dalley, Kerferd, Downer, Whittaker, Griffith, Giblin, and Fraser.

The Convention adjourned at 4 o'clock.