

No. 31.

The PREMIER, New Zealand, to the PREMIER, Victoria.

HAVE received following from Agent-General: "General Scratchley Special Commissioner Guinea. No further protectorate Islands. Agents-General paralyzed conflicting orders Australia yesterday. —London, 21."

22nd October, 1884.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 32.

The PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

TRY arrange New Zealand may have option annexing or confederating Samoa under Bill last year. Our instructions your actions wired colonial newspapers. Consider this undesirable. Endeavour arrange keep strictly private matters under negotiation.

22nd October, 1884.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 33.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SAMOA.—Could represent privately; but official inevitably entail refusal. Anyhow, Colonial Office do absolutely nothing until Sydney decides Convention. Those spurious Press telegrams endless mischief. Invariably keep strictly confidential myself.

22nd October, 1884.

F. D. BELL.

No. 34.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 24th October, 1884.

I transmit herewith a report of what took place in the House of Lords last night upon the reassembling of Parliament in relation to the Enabling Bill proposed by the Convention. I look upon it, for my own part, as absolutely certain that the crisis of affairs in connection with the Franchise Bill, Egypt, and other questions will prevent any Enabling Bill being passed during the "autumn session;" but that session might be prolonged by adjournment instead of prorogation, in which case no one can say what might happen.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure.

[The *Times*, Friday, 24th October, 1884.]

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.—HOUSE OF LORDS, Thursday, October 23.

The Federation of Australian Colonies.

IN reply to Lord CARNARVON, the Earl of DERBY said the Government had not yet received the reply of the Government of New South Wales, but they had reason to believe that they would receive it in about a week or ten days. He should have no objection to introduce a Bill in that House, and no doubt there would be time to discuss it; but whether it would be discussed in another place he could not undertake to say.

No. 35.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 24th October, 1884.

The meeting of the Agents-General to which I referred in my letter of the 17th instant, No. 451, took place on the 20th.

On the morning of that day the Agents of Victoria and New South Wales received telegrams from their Governments which made it clear to me that for any concerted action between us we were really paralyzed; while other events were happening to make it uncertain whether there would be any use in our seeing Lord Derby at all.

Our request for the interview had been sent in before the announcement of the protectorate over New Guinea was made. Immediately on that announcement, fresh difficulties arose. Victoria was dissatisfied at the protectorate not extending to the Islands, or in any way meeting the deficiency in jurisdiction there; New South Wales forbade any pressure whatever upon, or embarrassment of, the Imperial Government; New Zealand desired her own Confederation Bill, and power to arrange separately with the Islands. Any unity of purpose to which the Agents-General might help to give effect seemed farther off than ever. But in the meantime new complications were happening: negotiations were going on between England, Germany, and France on colonial questions, which would assuredly involve the Pacific; but this was at that time a secret, and no Agent-General could possibly refer to it even to his Government except in a vague way, such as the one in my letter No. 451. It was no secret, however, that the Cabinet had determined against any further protectorate at present, and that Lord Derby would do nothing until New South Wales had decided one way or the other about the Convention resolutions. To make matters worse, foolish and spurious telegrams were appearing in colonial papers about what was going on, to the great annoyance of every Australasian Government. The Agents-General, seeing no way clear before them, decided to