

respectable foreigners who came here, but they objected to receive the cast-off scum of other lands. They also objected to the maintenance of armies. If many of the Pacific Islands were annexed by foreign Powers, and utilized as naval stations, extra expenditure for defence purposes would have to be incurred by the Australian Colonies. Since this deputation had been decided upon Lord Granville had, it was stated, expressed a wish for a conference between the Governments of the Australian Colonies. The association thought that if the Government of this colony knew that the young men of the colony would be behind them in any action which they might take it might give the Government pleasure.

Mr. T. J. CONNELLY (vice-president of the association) said that the association thought that this deputation might be an incentive to the natives of New South Wales. The trouble was there. The association was trying all it could to co-operate with the natives of New South Wales and bring about a better feeling between the two colonies. Branches of the association had recently been established in New South Wales, and perhaps this deputation might incite the natives of that colony to take similar action. New Zealand was harder to reach. If the association had time it would send delegates to address the natives of New South Wales on these subjects. In the old countries the mutual jealousies of the Powers necessitated the maintenance of great armaments. Until recently, Australians hoped that such terrible burdens would not be necessary here, and that, consequently, the progress of these colonies as compared with that of other countries would be very rapid.

Mr. W. SMITHERS-GADD said it was satisfactory to note that Canada was with Australia in this matter. That fact ought to assist in the promotion of harmony between the colonies.

Mr. FIELD BARRETT held that the Pacific Islands belonged to Australasia, and that England made a mistake in allowing portion of New Guinea and New Caledonia to be annexed by foreign Powers. Ultimately Australasia must have all these islands, and, if England allowed any more of them to be appropriated by other Powers, she was entailing on our posterity unnecessary, cruel, and bloody war.

Mr. GILLIES said that he was pleased to meet the deputation, which had paid the Government a great compliment by coming. He had always felt pleased at the active part the association had taken in this movement. The association did great credit to Victoria. It had influenced public opinion to a large extent, and he was glad to hear that the association was trying to influence public opinion outside Victoria. Its efforts were certain to do much good, although they might not bear immediate fruit. All the colonies, if they got fair-play, were perfectly sound on this question. Little things might necessarily keep them apart; but all of them, he believed, either had communicated with England, or were about to do so, deprecating in the strongest possible language the possibility of these islands getting into the hands of any foreign Power. It was a very pleasant and new sensation for us to learn that the Canadian High Commissioner had been instructed by his Government to join the deputation of the Australian Agents-General on this subject. Mr. Griffith, representing the Federal Council, had sent a communication to the High Commissioner in London, thanking him very much for having joined the deputation, and requesting him to convey the thanks of the colonies to the Canadian Government. The colonies, with one united voice, would impress on the Imperial Government that under no circumstances should the annexation by any foreign Power of the New Hebrides be tolerated. He believed, from what he had heard, that the Imperial Government would not consent to any such annexation. But something more was required. No doubt if the colonies got lukewarm the chances were that, for some imagined Imperial advantage, some Minister of the Crown in England might be willing to come to terms with France, Germany, or some other Power, and allow them to get some of the Pacific Islands. It was only by vigilance and determination that the colonies could prevent anything of that kind being done. Of late there had been a vast improvement in the feeling between the colonies and the Mother-country. They understood at Home now better than they once did what it was to have kith and kin in this part of the world. That feeling was strengthening at Home, and, in spite of English Governments, would do more for us in cementing our hold on these islands than any communications between Governments. There was a strong feeling in England that they should do what they could to carry out our reasonable views. It was a matter of regret that the agreement of 1878 between England and France with regard to the New Hebrides was deemed necessary. Under that agreement neither Power could interfere with these islands. Previously there was no comparison between England's claim on the New Hebrides and the claim of any other Power. However, what had been done had been done. There was an agreement which had been more than once renewed. France pretended that if England gave her the New Hebrides she would not send out criminals to the Pacific. The colonies would not listen to such negotiations. If England only took a firm stand she would in a very little while be able to get the New Hebrides and the other islands. He did not believe that France had any idea of colonizing these islands. The claims of Australia to the possession of these islands were far and away superior to any that could be urged by other Powers. In the next fifty years Australasia would be sufficiently powerful, backed up as she would be by the whole Empire, to effectively lay hands on all these islands. The Government would leave nothing undone to urgently impress these views on the Imperial Government. It would almost go so far as to insist upon justice being done to us and to our posterity. The Government was in communication with the other Australian Colonies, and, as regards these questions, a very nice feeling existed between the Colonial Governments. There need be no doubt about the sending of a united protest. The Government had conveyed its views to the Agent-General for communication to the Imperial Government, and had also conveyed its views through the Governor. He believed all the other colonies were doing the same, and that the Imperial Government would be prepared to firmly accept their views and take a proper stand. But the colonies must also be vigilant, and might have to expend money in this direction. Victoria would, he believed, be willing to join with the other colonies in purchasing New Caledonia from the French. There was also some talk recently of the possibility of getting the remainder of New Guinea. That