

of intercolonial free-trade, and they confess that they are unable to understand how the broader education of the inhabitants of this colony is to be brought about by such association. The Commissioners are not impressed by these alleged advantages, and do not believe that federation or non-federation will affect the rapidly increasing intercourse between the Commonwealth and New Zealand.

In Australia another argument was used by some of the leading public men. It was urged that by the federation of New Zealand with Australia friction in reference to the trade with or control of the islands of the Pacific would be avoided. Reference was made to the supposed intention of New Zealand to federate with or annex certain of these islands, and it was contended that sooner or later disputes and differences were bound to arise between the Commonwealth and New Zealand concerning trade with the islands. This argument was chiefly urged in the State of New South Wales. In some of the other States such an argument was either deprecated or it was admitted that many of the islands of the Pacific afforded natural opportunities for administration from New Zealand.

CONCLUSION.

Your Commissioners, after giving the fullest consideration to the evidence before them, and with their knowledge of the soil, climate, and productiveness of New Zealand, of the adaptability of the lands of the colony for close settlement, of her vast natural resources, her immense wealth in forest, in mine, and natural scenery, of the energy of her people, of the abundant rainfall and vast water-power she possesses, of her insularity and geographical position; remembering, too, that New Zealand as a colony can herself supply all that can be required to support and maintain within her boundaries a population which might at no distant date be worthily styled a nation, have unanimously arrived at the conclusion that merely for the doubtful prospect of further trade with the Commonwealth of Australia, or for any advantage which might reasonably be expected to be derived by this colony from becoming a State in such Commonwealth, New Zealand should not sacrifice her independence as a separate colony, but that she should maintain it under the political Constitution she at present enjoys.

Your Commissioners therefore most respectfully beg to report to your Excellency that, in their unanimous opinion, it is not desirable that New Zealand should federate with and become a State of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Your Commissioners desire to add that in Australia they found the most friendly feeling towards New Zealand, not only among members of the Federal and States Governments and public men, but among all classes with whom they came in contact; and, whilst the opinion was expressed that whether or not New Zealand should enter the Federation was a question principally for her to decide, it is certain that, should this colony decide in the affirmative, she would be warmly welcomed into the Commonwealth on terms at least as advantageous as if she had been an original State.

Your Commissioners desire to inform your Excellency that they received the utmost kindness, courtesy, information, and assistance from the members of the Federal and States Governments in prosecuting their inquiries in Australia. The Federal and States officials were enjoined to afford all requisite information; ready access was given to all statistics and public records, and, generally, everything was done to facilitate the work of the Commission.

All which is, with great respect, submitted to your Excellency.

As witness our hands and seals, at Wellington, this thirtieth day of May, 1901.

(L.S.)	ALBERT PITT, Chairman.	J. A. MILLAR.
	HAROLD BEAUCHAMP.	W. S. REID.
	CHAS. C. BOWEN.	JOHN ROBERTS.
	THOMSON W. LEYS.	W. R. RUSSELL.
	CHARLES M. LUKE.	WILLIAM JUKES STEWARD.