

## No. 3.

New Zealand, No. 203.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 27th November, 1919.

I have the honour to transmit to Your Excellency, for the information of your Ministers, the accompanying copy of a letter which has been received from the International Research Council, and of a letter from the Astronomer Royal, regarding a project for the standardization of longitudes, in which the co-operation of the New Zealand Government is desired.

The Bureau has been informed that their letter has been referred to you.

I have, &amp;c.,

Governor-General His Excellency the Right Hon.

MILNER.

Earl of Liverpool, P.C., G.C.M.G., G.B.E., M.V.O., &amp;c.

## Enclosures.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL (CONSEIL INTERNATIONALE DE RESEARCHES).

Permanent domicile: Brussels. General Secretariat: London.

MY LORD,—

Burlington House, London W. 1, 5th November, 1919.

I enclose a copy of a communication from the Bureau des Longitudes de France, in which they ask for the co-operation of New Zealand in the important work of the standardization of longitudes. This memorandum was sent to the High Commissioner for New Zealand on the 21st March, and, I understand, is approved by the Government Astronomer in the Dominion. I have now received a copy of a memorandum from the Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, in which it is said, "It has been decided to take no action in the direction indicated, as it is held that serious consideration should not be given to the proposals of the Bureau des Longitudes by this Dominion unless the suggestion come through the Secretary of State for the Colonies, when the matter will then be dealt with from the Imperial point of view." I should be grateful if you would kindly give this matter your recommendation, as considerable scientific importance is attached to the proposals of the Bureau des Longitudes de France.

I remain, &amp;c.,

The Right Hon. Viscount Milner, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.

ARTHUR SCHUSTER.

SIR,—

Royal Observatory, Greenwich, London S.E., 17th November, 1919.

In reply to your letter of the 13th instant, 63817/1919, the following information as to the Bureau des Longitudes de France is forwarded.

The Bureau is a permanent committee founded by the National Convention of 1795, the 25th June, which has no analogue in this country. It is composed of three members appointed by the French Academy of Sciences, five astronomers, three members belonging to the Marine Department, one member belonging to the War Department, one representative each from the Service géographique de l'Armée, the Service hydrographique de la Marine, and the Service du Nivellement général du Ministère des Travaux publics, and four other members. In addition, there are twenty-four corresponding members, of whom not more than twelve may be chosen from amongst foreign scientists. The British corresponding members at present are Sir W. H. Christie (late Astronomer Royal), Dr. P. H. Cowell (Director of the Nautical Almanac Office), and myself.

The purpose of the Bureau is stated to be the improvement of the various branches of astronomical science, and their applications to geography, navigation, and the physics of the globe. The Bureau prepares and publishes the "Connaissance des Temps," according to the British Nautical Almanac, and the "Extrait de la Connaissance des Temps," for the use of navigators. It also publishes an important and useful *annuaire*.

The relations of the Bureau with Government and scientific institutions in this country have always been friendly. In particular the Royal Observatory and the Paris Observatory, through the Bureau des Longitudes, have collaborated in several determinations of longitude. The Bureau is also closely associated with international scientific Commissions, such as the Commission Internationale de l'Heure.

With reference to the proposals from the Bureau referred to in the copy of the letter from the International Research Council, transmitted with your letter of the 13th instant, I may add that these proposals embrace a more comprehensive scheme of determination of longitudes than has ever been undertaken. This has been made possible by the development of wireless telegraphy and its adaptation to the transmission of time signals. The proposals are of great scientific importance, and I have promised the co-operation of the Royal Observatory. I hope that it will be found possible to secure also the co-operation of New Zealand in this scheme.

I have, &amp;c.,

H. L. JONES,

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office, London S.W. 1.

For Astronomer Royal.