1863.

QUEENSLAND.

WESTERN BOUNDARY OF QUEENSLAND.
(CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING THE)

[In continuation of Papers presented in the Sessions of 1861 and 1862.]

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of his Excellency the Governor.

No. 1.
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to THE GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND.
Downing Street,
21 September, 1862.

Sir,

I transmit to you herewith a copy of a letter addressed to me by Sir Charles Nicholson, strongly recommending that the northern part of Australia should be formed into a new Colony, or that a portion of the territory in question should be annexed to Queensland. I also forward a copy of the letter addressed by my desire to the Land and Emigration Commissioners on the subject, together with a copy of the Report received from them in reply.

You will find that the course which I should be prepared to advise to Her Majesty, would be, to annex to South Australia as much of the territory as lies south of the tropic, and to attach the rest of it provisionally to Queensland.

The papers transmitted render it unnecessary for me to advert to any matters of detail which will have to be dealt with, and I need, therefore, only instruct you to submit this Despatch, and the accompanying papers, to your advisers for their consideration, in order that I may be informed whether they will be prepared to accept this addition of territory, subject to the liability of separation when matters were ripe for it, and to the obligation of keeping the accounts of the new Districts, and of such others as are likely to be detached with them, in such a manner as to facilitate the ultimate division of North Australia into separate Colonies.

I have, &c.,
BEwCASTLE.

Governor Sir GEORGE P. BOWEN, G.C.M.G.,
&c., &c., &c.

[Enclosure, No. 1.]

SIR CHARLES NICHOLSON, BART. to THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.
5, Cleveland Row, London.
July, 1862.

My LORD DUKE,

I believe it will be quite unnecessary for me to offer any apology for trespassing on your Grace's attention, in relation to a matter the importance of which, I am persuaded, your Grace will be prepared to recognize.

1. The rapid growth and unparalleled prosperity of the new Colony of Queensland, since its erection into a separate dependency of the British Crown, are facts with which your Grace is doubtless fully acquainted. The British public generally, and perhaps...
most persons unconnected with the Colony itself, are scarcely conversant with the fact of the rapid progress of settlement, both to the north, north-west and west of that territory. Already extensive explorations have been made, the result of private enterprise, in the north, towards the sources of the Burdekin River, and large tracts have been taken up for pastoral purposes in the region known as the "Bassaltic Table Land of Leichhardt," and on the sources of the Lynd and Gilbert Rivers, which flow into the Gulf of Carpentaria. The occupants of the country here referred to have found a practicable road to the coast, at a point known as Rockingham Bay, in latitude 17° south. The extreme northern limits of European settlement may, at the present moment, be considered as extending as far as the 140°rd degree of east longitude and 10° 30' of south latitude, and as being, in point of fact, within 150 or 200 miles of the Gulf of Carpentaria. On the west, the whole of the basin of the "Barcoo," for several hundred miles, as far as the 142°nd meridian of east longitude, is becoming rapidly occupied by squatters, and the authorized possession of the greater part of it has already, I believe, been secured under pastoral licenses. The active enterprise of the settlers of Queensland has led them to explore, and partially to occupy, not only the beautiful valley of the Fitzroy and its branches, the rich belt of country along the coast extending from Keppel Bay to Cape Palmerston, and the country watered by the Lower Burdekin, but has also led them in various directions through the tropical regions of the Colony. Large flocks of sheep and herds of horned cattle are constantly arriving from the Colonies of South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales, for the purpose of occupying this new and promising land. An additional stimulus is afforded to this enterprise by the liberal regulations that have been enacted by the Government of Queensland for the leasing of the waste lands of the Crown.

2. Your Grace will thus perceive, on reference to a map of the Continent of Australia, that the limits of European occupation have reached a point closely approximating to the 141°rd meridian of east longitude, which, by the interpretation given to the terms of Her Majesty's Order in Council, constitutes the western boundary of the Colony of Queensland. The whole of the country west of this line and north of the 26° of south latitude, as far west as the 129°th meridian of east longitude (which forms the eastern boundary of Western Australia), is extra-limitary, and practically is not included within the jurisdiction of the Government of the Australian Colonies; for, although I believe it to be conceded that the district herein referred to is to be technically regarded as a residuary portion of the large territory originally belonging to New South Wales, and is legally included within the limits of that Colony, yet, in point of fact, the Government of New South Wales has never assumed the jurisdiction whatever with respect to it. Queensland and South Australia intervene between New South Wales proper and North Australia, and the two latter are thus necessarily permanently dissociated from each other so far as regards all the purposes of government. Very grave inconveniences would indeed ensue were the Executive authorities of New South Wales to take upon themselves to alienate land, to grant leases, or to assume any of the functions of government in North Australia. In consequence, however remote, that such powers may be called into exercise, constitutes a principal reason for calling your Grace's attention thus pointedly to the matter. In consequence of an application which has been made to Her Majesty by the Government of Queensland, and which application, if I am rightly informed, has been favourably entertained by your Grace, the western boundary of Queensland has been extended from the 141° to the 139°th degree of east longitude, so as to include the estuaries of the Nicholson, the Leichhardt, and the Albert Rivers. Subject to the change that has thus been made in the boundaries of Queensland, the whole of the vast regions to the westward will still remain practically, and for all the purposes of government, beyond the jurisdiction of any of the conterminous colonies.

3. I venture to submit, with much earnestness and great deference, to your Grace, the manifold evils which must ensue from the absence of all lawful authority to be exercised in Her Majesty's name in the vast region indicated above. Within a very few months the desire of occupying new country will tempt many persons, with their servants and flocks and herds, to locate themselves in this new district. The probability also is that many individuals who may have made themselves obnoxious to the laws will, for the purpose of escaping the pursuit of justice, betake themselves in the same direction. No Magistrate holding a commission from the Governor of Queensland will be enabled to exercise his functions as a Justice of the Peace, and there will, ere long, be called into existence a community, in which there will be an entire absence of all means for the enforcement of law and order.

4. Whilst the reasons above set forth may be deemed sufficiently urgent to justify the Imperial Government in taking steps for the establishment of Her Majesty's authority in the only portion of the Continent of Australia in which it is not already duly recognized, there are, I venture to submit, additional grounds that will justify your Grace's immediate interference in the matter. From its geographical position, the territory referred to enjoys advantages such as are possessed by scarcely any of the other Colonies of the Australian group. It constitutes, in point of fact, that portion of the continent of Australia nearest in a direct line to Great Britain. It is in close proximity to Java, and the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, and is within a few days' reach of China and Japan. Its physical capabilities are also, according to the evidence of Mr. Gregory and those by whom it has been explored, of a very superior kind. The whole of the northern coast is indented with deep bays, accessible to large vessels, whilst the Victoria River is represented as one of the largest navigable streams in Australia, the tide rising some thirty feet at its embouchure in Queen Charlotte's Channel. Mr. Gregory, the distinguished explorer, and present Surveyor-General
GEORGE OF QUEENSLAND (a gentleman upon whose caution and accuracy the greatest reliance may be placed), represents the whole of the valley of the Victoria River as being of the most promising description, well adapted for grazing purposes, and, no doubt, admirably fitted by nature for the growth of all tropical produce, such as cotton, sugar, rice, and coffee. Horses, the race of which has become so prolific in the other colonies that they are of scarcely any value, would here speedily constitute an article of export to India of the greatest importance, both as affecting the colony itself, and as regards the Indian Government in the supply of cavalry.

5. Whilst I may venture to assume that your Grace may be disposed to admit the importance of the foregoing data, and the expediency of at once invoking the royal authority in the creation of a separate and independent colony of the British Crown, I can readily conceive, as a ground for postponing such a step, that to give effect to it would necessarily involve a considerable expenditure of money, and that no provision for such an outlay has been already made, or, if hereafter proposed, would be likely to be sanctioned by Parliament from Imperial funds. I would respectfully anticipate such an objection, and at once say, as a British subject and an Australian colonist, that I fully recognise the justice of the principle that all colonies should defray the cost attendant upon their creation, their internal organisation, and maintenance; and that the heavily-taxed community of England should not be burdened by charges incident to such a proposal as that now submitted to your Grace's consideration. I have already observed that there are numerous parties pressing forward towards the unsettled district included within the boundaries which it is proposed should constitute those of the new Colony. Such parties would pay, with the greatest alacrity, a moderate rental to secure a reasonable tenure of the lands they may assume the occupation of. As one of revenue would thus be at once created, which would augment on the arrival of each new occupant. Certain localities may also be indicated, as on the banks of the Victoria and Alligator Rivers, which must become the sites of large and important towns—great metropolitan centres of trade and commerce. These sites, if judiciously selected, and laid out in appropriate allotments, would immediately find purchasers at considerable (probably very large) prices. From these two sources—the rental and the sale of Crown lands—I am satisfied a sufficient sum would speedily be realised to cover all the expenses connected with the foundation of the Colony and the maintenance of the small number of administrative officers required for the conduct of its government.

6. Having thus endeavored to demonstrate to your Grace the necessity that exists for placing the district, which (in the absence of any more specific name, to be conferred by royal authority) may be designated as North Australia, under a separate Government, and having stated my entire conviction that as such a measure ought not, so in reality it would not, involve any actual cost to the British Treasury, I will not trespass further on your Grace's time than by simply suggesting the two several modes, under either one of which the desired end might be achieved. They are—

1st.—By the creation of a separate Government, and by a temporary loan from the Imperial Treasury, the repayment of which, with interest, should be guaranteed from the land fund of the Colony. A very moderate sum, £20,000 or £25,000, ought to suffice to inaugurate the Government and defray all its expenses for the first twelve or eighteen months of its existence.

2nd.—By the temporary annexation of North Australia to Queensland, with the understanding that a distinct account of revenue and expenditure should be kept, with a view to the eventual detachment of the annexed district from the parent Colony, and its erection into a separate dependency. The only advantage which it appears to me this second proposition offers is, that it might forthwith be acted upon; whilst the former would, I presume, necessarily require the intervention of Parliament.

There are, I believe, at the present moment, individuals and companies who would eagerly accept the condition of establishing the new Colony at their own cost, upon the concession of certain rights and privileges being secured to them. It is difficult to contemplate the existence of any such schemes without associating with them the evils of monopolies; and there can be little doubt that it will be conducive to the interests of the British community generally, as well as to the future Colony, that, under all circumstances, the authority of the Crown should be maintained unfettered and paramount.

The only difficulty that presents itself is the mere initiation of the Colony. Once set on foot, it would find within itself sources of vitality and growth that would render it independent of all external aid, and speedily render it one of the most important and thriving dependencies of the British Crown. Humbly submitting all the foregoing facts to your Grace's consideration,

I have, &c.,

CHARLES NICHOLSON.
GENTLEMEN,

With reference to previous proposals of a similar nature which have been referred to you from this department, I am directed by the Duke of Newcastle to transmit to you the copy of a letter which has been received from Sir C. Nicholson, in which, for the reasons assigned, he urges the establishment of a new colony in the northern part of Australia, or the early annexation to Queensland of that portion of the continent which he has defined.

His Grace is of opinion, that although the formation of another separate colony is premature, it will be necessary that some measures should be taken for conferring protection and enforcing order among the squatters who have settled, or are likely soon to settle, in these districts; and with this view his Grace will probably advise Her Majesty to annex to South Australia so much of this territory as lies south of the tropic, and to attach the rest of it provisionally to Queensland, thus avoiding the expense, risk, and inconvenience of founding a settlement under the auspices of the Home Government, in a tropical climate, and placing the occupation of the country, the management of lands, the laying out of towns, and the enforcement of order, in the hands of a Government having funds available for the purpose, and able to exercise an immediate inspection and control over what is going on.

I am to call your attention to the recent Act 25th Vict., cap. 44, by clause 2 of which Her Majesty is empowered to annex to existing colonies territories now forming part of New South Wales, and also to the other Acts of Parliament recited in that Act, as containing the powers of the British Government in respect to the erection of new colonies or the enlargement of existing ones.

F. ROGERS.

P.S.—Since writing as above, your letter of the 7th instant, reporting on the proposed bill to erect North Australia into a colony, has been received.

[Enclosure, No. 3.]

Mr. Murdoch to Sir F. Rogers.

Emigration Office,
19 August, 1862.

Sir,

I have to acknowledge your letter of 11th instant, with a letter from Sir C. Nicholson, urging the importance of either erecting a new colony in North Australia, or of temporarily annexing North Australia to Queensland, for the purposes of immediate government. You state that the Duke of Newcastle is of opinion that measures must be taken for the protection and control of the squatters who either have already settled, or are likely to settle, on the territory in question, and that he will probably advise Her Majesty to annex it for that purpose, partly to South Australia and partly to Queensland. But his Grace desires, before coming to a final conclusion, to receive a report from us on the subject.

2. Sir C. Nicholson states, as the grounds of his suggestion, that extensive explorations have already been made towards the sources of the Burdekin River; that large tracts have been taken up for pastoral purposes on the Lynd and Gilbert Rivers, which flow into the Gulf of Carpentaria; that flocks of sheep and herds of cattle are constantly arriving in these new districts; and that European settlement may now be considered as practically extending to within 150 or 200 miles of the Gulf of Carpentaria. That though nominally attached to New South Wales, this territory is, in fact, beyond the limits of any colony; that, consequently, there is no legal authority existing within it; that if left in this condition it will become the resort of criminals, and will be exposed to the evils of anarchy; and that its future erection into a colony would be embarrassed by the claims and interests that will grow up under the present want of system. He further suggests, that the establishment of a separate colony in these districts ought not, in the first instance, to cost more than £20,000 or £25,000. That if this amount were advanced, in the first instance, by the mother country, the land revenue to be derived from the rental and sales of land would be an ample guarantee for its repayment, and that the squatters who are now going in would be perfectly willing to pay a fair rent. But if the Duke of Newcastle is not prepared to advise the erection of a new Colony, Sir C. Nicholson then proposes the temporary annexation of the territory to Queensland, with the understanding that the accounts of the land revenue should be kept distinct, with a view to the eventual separation of the territory from Queensland and its erection into an independent Colony.

3. For the reasons stated in your letter, and having reference to the necessarily temporary nature of any arrangements that may now be made, it would clearly be more advisable to extend the jurisdiction of South Australia and Queensland over North Australia, as is contemplated by the Duke of Newcastle, than to erect it at once into a separate Colony. Looking to the vast extent of North Australia and to the nature of the country, as far as it has been at present explored, it is impossible to doubt that at no distant day it will be necessary
necessary not only to give it a separate administration, but to divide it into two, if not more Colonies. Two regions particularly present themselves as the centres of future extensive settlements—the Victoria River on the extreme west, and the Albert River on the Gulf of Carpentaria; between these lies a tract of some 600 or 700 miles, part of which is said to be well grassed, and fitted for settlement, but a considerable portion barren and worthless. To the south of the tract also, it would seem that though there are at intervals spots of good pasturage land, well supplied with water, there are also large tracts of sandy and worthless land, where no water is to be found, which can scarcely, under any circumstances, become fit for settlement.

4. When population increases over this vast territory, which cannot be less than 730,000 square miles in extent, it is clear that neither the Victoria River at one extremity, nor the Albert River at the other, would be a fitting spot for the government of the whole. Each will be the natural port and seat of government of a separate Colony. Keeping this in view, all that it seems desirable at present to effect is, to provide for the temporary government of the territory, until the increase of population shall make a more permanent arrangement advisable. This can be done by the issue of an Order in Council, under the Act 24 and 25 Vic., c. 44, annexing the northern part of the territory to the Colony of Queensland, and the southern to the Colony of South Australia, as is proposed in your letter. The territory would thus be brought within the jurisdiction of an established system of laws and government, and the Governors of the respective Colonies would be enabled to appoint Magistrates and other officers within its boundaries; and although it would be too distant to allow of a ready appeal to the Courts of the respective Colonies, the knowledge of the possibility of such an appeal would not be without its effect in promoting order in the territory.

5. Among the officers whom it would be necessary to appoint at once would be a surveyor, whose first duty it would be to obtain a general knowledge of the land on the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria and about the Victoria River, and to mark out, in a general way, the sites of the towns which can scarcely fail to spring up at no distant time in those districts. As both can be easily reached by water, it would probably not be very difficult to perform this first duty; and whoever might be selected for it would derive an incalculable advantage from the presence at the head of the Survey Department of Queensland, of Mr. Gregory, the distinguished explorer of the Northern Coast of Australia. As no other man has such a knowledge of that coast, so no other man could with the same authority direct and assist the operations of the surveyor who may be selected. Mr. Gregory will probably be able to indicate the sites, evidently marked out by nature, for the main towns of the future Colony or Colonies; and if these are at once reserved, no other reservations would be necessary. The trading population will naturally group itself, in the first instance, round the port at which the commerce of the Colony must be carried on; and the reservation of sites for towns or villages in the interior may well be postponed, till the course of events points out where they may be most advantageously fixed.

6. It only remains to notice Sir C. Nicholson's suggestion, that the land revenue of the new territory should be kept distinct from that of the older Colonies, with a view to prevent future difficulty, when it is decided to erect North Australia into a separate Colony. In this respect it does not occur to us that any difficulty could be experienced. The same thing was done in New South Wales, with reference to the land revenue of Port Phillip, previous to the erection of Victoria into a distinct Colony. All that would be necessary would be an instruction to the Treasurer of Queensland to open a separate account of receipts and expenditure for the new territory; and it would be interesting to know, from time to time, how that account stood. A similar instruction might be given to the Receiver General of South Australia, though it is not likely that much revenue will accrue from the portion of the territory to be annexed to that Colony, nor is it so important to reserve the means of easily separating it at a future date. As the land south of the tropie will be much nearer the settled district of South Australia than of North Australia, it will probably be decided hereafter not to extend the southern boundary of North Australia below the tropie.

I have, &c.,

T. W. G. MURDOCH.

No. 2.

THE GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND to THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

Government House,
Brisbane, Queensland,
18 January, 1863.

MY LORD DUKE,

1. With reference to your Grace's Despatch No. 28 of the 21st September ult., covering a letter from Sir Charles Nicholson, and a Report from Her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners, respecting a proposed division of the northern portion of this continent between the Colonies of Queensland and of South Australia, I have now the honor, in obedience
obedience to your Grace’s instructions, to transmit a Minute of the Executive Council, containing the decision arrived at by the Government of this Colony on the question submitted to its consideration.

2. I enclose also a Memorandum from Mr. Augustus Gregory, now the Surveyor-General of Queensland, and formerly the leader of the North Australian expedition of 1856, who is universally admitted to be the man of all men best qualified to pronounce an opinion on this subject.

3. These enclosures will, I think, repay an attentive perusal. The Minute of Council so clearly sets forth the decision of the Government of Queensland, and the reasons upon which that decision is based (which, I venture to believe, will commend themselves to your Grace’s approbation,) that I need add little except that I concur with the conclusion at which my responsible advisers have arrived. Indeed it will be seen that they simply adhere to the arrangement submitted, on behalf of the Government and Legislature of this Colony, and by the recommendation of Mr. Gregory, in my despatch No. 79 of 30th September 1860; printed, with its enclosures, (including a skeleton Map of Australia,) at pages 56-60, of the “Papers Relative to Queensland,” laid before the Imperial Parliament in 1861.* Several of the suggestions then submitted have since been carried into effect by your Grace.

4. As Mr. Gregory observes in his Memorandum, herewith enclosed,—(Enclosure No. 2.)—subsequent events have tended powerfully to confirm the opinions expressed in my Despatch of 1860 and in its Enclosures, with regard to the best practical adjustment, for the present, of the lines of demarcation between the several Australian Colonies.

5. Moreover, Governor Sir Dominick Daly has recently informed me that the proposals of Queensland are “in all their main features in accordance with those that the Government of South Australia has already submitted for the consideration of the “Secretary of State.” As is remarked in the enclosed Minute of Council, the fact that South Australia and Queensland,—the two Colonies concerned in the question at issue,—have, without previous concert, and by independent processes of reasoning, arrived at the same conclusion, is of itself a strong argument in favor of that conclusion.

6. Again, the President of the Royal Geographical Society, in the annual address delivered on 26th May, 1862, (page 171,) expressed himself as follows:—“There can be no doubt that the Colonists of Queensland will soon extend their pastures to the Gulf of Carpentaria; and that the northernmost settlers of South Australia, following up the track of Stuart, will ere long found establishments in the bosom of the noble recesses of Cambridge Gulf and the Northern Victoria River, where fleets can anchor securely, and where the vegetation is luxuriant.” It would appear, therefore, that both the scientific and the practical men are agreed upon this question.

7. In your speech at the Australian dinner in London last February, your Grace is reported to have called Queensland “an infant in years, but a giant in strength, in efforts, and in aspirations.” I need scarcely say that this sentiment was highly applauded here. Queensland has undertaken the provisional charge, under Her Majesty’s Letters Patent of 13th March 1862,† of the entire North-eastern corner of the Australian Continent, including the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria up to the 138th meridian of longitude. This Colony has undertaken this additional trust in the general interests of British colonization, and certainly not in any spirit of vain-glory or self-aggrandizement. For Queensland can derive little but trouble and expense from the temporary management of districts which will undoubtedly demand separation so soon as they shall become self-supporting. The cost of the extension of the machinery of police and justice over our present territory of 678,000 square miles—nearly twice as large as Canada and six times as large as the United Kingdom, is so great that the Queenslanders already tax themselves, by the spontaneous Acts of their own Parliament, at the rate of above seven pounds (£7) per head of the existing population; that is, they tax themselves more than three times as heavily as the people of Great Britain are taxed. And such is the patriotism and energy of this community, that I really am inclined to believe that they would be willing to tax themselves still more heavily for the

* These Papers are in the Parliamentary Library.
† See Parliamentary Papers of 1862.
purpose of undertaking the Government also of the north-western coast of this continent, (as the Emigration Commissioners suggest in their Report to your Grace of August 19th ult.) did not the concurrent testimony of all practical explorers go to prove that an arrangement of that nature would be detrimental to the general interests of the British Empire in Australia.

8. Communication between Brisbane and any future settlements on the north-western coast could be kept up only by sea, a somewhat perilous voyage of about two thousand miles, through the intricate navigation of Torres Straits; and generally practicable only for steamers of considerable power, owing to the prevalence of the south-east trade wind during the greater portion of the year. On the other hand, an overland route from Adelaide to the north-west coast has recently been explored by Mr. Macdonnell Stuart; and the South Australians seem eager to avail themselves of this outlet for the surplus stock of their available pastoral country, so limited when compared with the vast and still unoccupied pastures of Queensland. This part of the case is very clearly stated by Mr. Gregory.

9. Again, the public expenditure of South Australia is not nearly so large, in proportion to the population, as that of Queensland; so that the former Colony is better able to make a temporary sacrifice in the general interests of British colonization.

10. The conclusion at which both South Australia and Queensland have arrived seems to be that the former Colony should take charge of North-western Australia, on conditions similar to those under which the latter Colony has taken charge of North-eastern Australia.

11. It is to be presumed that, since the Imperial Government is not as yet prepared to erect North-western Australia into a separate Colony, guarantees will be taken to enable the future settlers in that district, so soon as they shall be in a condition to support a local Government, to relieve themselves from what ancient and modern history alike shows to be the most unsatisfactory of all political positions, that, namely, of a dependency on a dependency.

12. It will be observed that North-western Australia is called "Albert" on Mr. Gregory’s Map at page 59 of the “Queensland Parliamentary Papers.” Whatever name may be adopted for the new province, I beg most respectfully to submit that it ought to be distinctive; and that the appellation of "North Australia" would be entirely inappropriate; for a glance at the map will show that the Queensland territory at Cape York stretches further to the north than any portion of the country which it is now proposed so to name.

13. Without endorsing all the sentiments of the following extract from one of Dr. Lang’s works, it is impossible to deny that there is much that is suggestive in it:—"When the project of forming a British colony on some part of the Southern coast of Australia—chiefly with the view to the carrying out of a new theory of colonization, was in agitation in London in the year 1834, I took the liberty, on meeting with certain of the projectors of that colony, to recommend that they should by all means give it a distinctive and appropriate designation, and suggested that, in honor of the reigning Sovereign, His late Majesty King William the Fourth, (in whose reign the new theory had been projected,) it should be called Williamsland. Unfortunately, however, my suggestion was not received, and the godfathers and godmothers of the first-born of the Wakefield theory, named the child South Australia. It was as absurd a name for a colony in any such locality, as if the British colony of Demerara had been called South America, or the island of Ireland, West Europe. It was neither distinctive nor appropriate, as every proper name ought to be; not distinctive, because it applies equally to any part of the extensive coast line from Cape Howe, the south-eastern, to Cape Leeuwin, the south-western extremity of the Australian land, a distance of not less than two thousand miles; not appropriate, because a large portion of the neighboring province of Port Phillip to the eastward is considerably further south than any part of what is now called by authority South Australia. How such a name could have received the sanction of any number of mere metropolitan speculators in new colonies and colonial stock is easily conceivable; for the more irrational any scheme of the kind appears to be in the eye of common sense, the more favour it seems to meet with in certain quarters in the British metropolis; but how
it could also have passed muster with the Secretary of State, and the two Houses of Parliament, so as to be adopted in an Act of the Imperial Legislature, I cannot imagine. To give such a mere apology for a name to a British Colony, and it may be to another infant empire, under so high a sanction too, argues a poverty of conception and a want of discernment discreetable alike to the intellect and the taste of the nation, and must tend to give enlightened foreigners a very mean idea of both.

A single slip of this kind might indeed have been passed over and forgiven; but the name ‘South Australia,’ absurd as it is, seems to have been already exalted into a sort of national precedent in the estimation of the Colonial Office; for one of the last acts of the colonial autocracy of my Lord Stanley, was to take the requisite measures for the establishment of a new penal colony on the north-eastern coast of New Holland, of which Sir Charles Fiurgeon, the present Governor of New South Wales, has actually been gazetted as Governor, under the style and title of Governor of North Australia. North Australia, forsooth! Why, I have no doubt that, in a very few years hence, there will be three or four British colonies along the northern coast of New Holland, all equally entitled to the same general designation.”

14. In the last-quoted paragraph, Dr. Lang refers to the abortive penal colony at Port Curtis, established by the Imperial Government in 1846, and broken up in 1847. But the principle of nomenclature contended for remains the same at the present day.

15. In my despatch No. 20, of the 10th May ult., I mentioned to your Grace a suggestion which had been made here, to the effect that the then recent decease of His late Royal Highness the Prince Consort added a melancholy confirmation of the proposal which I had first hazarded in my Despatch No. 79, of 30th September, 1860—to the purport that the north-western corner of the Australian Continent, when formed into a new province, should be named the “Colony of Albert.” I continued in the following words: “It is generally understood that Prince Albert was wont to take a keen interest in the progress of the British settlements in Australia. And it is urged that, as the name of the great colony in the south east of this continent will be a remembrance to the latest ages of Queen Victoria, so the projected colony in the north-west would be a fit memorial of Her much-lamented Consort—a memorial in accordance with what we may suppose to have been the wishes of the departed. It would, indeed, be a noble monument, destined, probably, in some future age (like Virginia, Carolina, and Maryland, in America), to outlive the British Empire itself in Australia; and to last so long as the English race and the English language shall endure upon the earth.”

I have, &c.,

G. F. BOWEN.

His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, K.G.
&c., &c., &c.

[Enclosure No. 1, in Despatch No. 5.]

EXTRACT from the Minutes of Proceedings of the Executive Council of Queensland, on 14th January, 1863.

PRESENT:

His Excellency the Governor in Council.

Referring to the Despatch of His Grace the Secretary of State for the Colonies, No. 28 of the 21st September, ult., covering a letter from Sir Charles Nicholson, and a report from Her Majesty’s Emigration Commissioners, respecting a proposed division between the Colonies of Queensland and of South Australia, of the Northern portion of the Australian Continent; referring also to the Memorandum on that scheme by Mr. Surveyor-General Gregory, to all of which documents the attention of the Executive had been previously directed, His Excellency the Governor now consults the Council as to the decision of the Government of Queensland upon the whole question.

The Council again deliberate upon this important subject, which has so often in various shapes engaged their careful attention. After full enquiry and examination, they express their concurrence with the opinions set forth in Mr. Gregory’s Memorandum; and they unanimously adhere to the plan of division submitted, on behalf of the Government and Legislature of this Colony, by His Excellency Sir G. Bowen in his Despatch No. 79, of 30th September, 1860, printed (with its enclosures), at pages 56–60, of the “Papers Relative to Queensland,” laid before the Imperial Parliament in 1861.
It is within the knowledge of the Council that the Government of South Australia have also (though without concert with the Government of Queensland) submitted a scheme which is similar in all its main features. While the fact that South Australia, by an independent process of reasoning, arrived at a like conclusion, strengthens the confidence of the Council in the justice of their own views, they cannot refrain from recording their surprise that the Emigration Commissioners in London, when discussing the distribution of the territory in question between two Australian Colonies, should entirely ignore the views of the Governments and Legislatures of those two Colonies upon this very subject. The Commissioners indeed appear to ignore not only what the two Colonies principally concerned have recommended, but also what Her Majesty the Queen, on the advice of the Secretary of State, has already actually done in this matter. For Mr. Murdoch, in his report of August 18th ult., while offering suggestions as to the manner in which the country near the Albert River and the Gulf of Carpentaria should be disposed of in the future, seems to have forgotten (though attention to this fact had been invited in Sir Charles Nicholson's Memorial upon which he was reporting), that this very territory up to the 138th meridian of longitude, had already been annexed to Queensland by Her Majesty's Letters Patent, under the great seal of England, dated March 18th, 1862, and transmitted to His Excellency Sir George Bowen, in the Despatch of His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, marked "Separate," of 12th April, 1862.* The Council further refer the Emigration Board to the Duke of Newcastle's Despatch on the same point, No. 39 of 14th December 1861. In that Despatch, after detailing the just and reasonable conditions under which this additional territory had been temporarily annexed to Queensland, His Grace continues: "I do not feel myself at liberty, without the strongest grounds, to alter the boundaries of Colonies once fixed with the consent and acquiescence of the inhabitants." The Council, therefore, feel perfect confidence that the arrangements so recently sanctioned—viz. the extension of the boundary of this Colony to the 138th meridian, will not be disturbed, except on the petition of the inhabitants of the districts concerned, or on other unexceptionable grounds of Imperial and Colonial policy.

The Council here feel it to be their duty to submit earnestly but most respectfully to the Secretary of State, that much inconvenience is likely to result from the ventilation of colonizing schemes by boards or individuals resident in London, whether official or non-official; such schemes being founded on no practical knowledge of Australia, but simply on abstract notions of the general fitness of things. Schemes of this nature can hardly fail to be of a mischievous tendency; especially when, as in the present instance, they are at variance with the plans adopted by the Colonial Governments themselves, after long and careful examination, and upon the advice of Mr. Gregory, and other eminent explorers of the territory in question; for they tend to unsettle the minds of actual or intending bona fide colonists, while they give encouragement and facilities to land-jobbers, and speculators of various kinds.

So far as the Council understand the theory recommended by the Emigration Board, it is that the northern portion of the Australian continent should be divided into two zones, overlapping each other, one North and the other South of the Tropic of Capricorn; the former zone to be annexed to Queensland, and the latter to South Australia. It is to be feared that a scheme of this nature will not recommend itself to any practical colonist. For (as an examination of the map of Australia will prove,) it would follow that Cambridge Gulf on the North-west coast (for example,) would have to be governed from Brisbane, while districts many hundred miles nearer Brisbane would have to be governed from Adelaide! Nor is this all. The only feasible communication between Brisbane and the North-west coast would be by Torres Straits; a voyage of about three thousand miles, and one practicable for steamers alone during the greater part of the year, on account of the trade-winds. Now Queensland as yet possesses no steamers fit for such a purpose. His Grace the Duke of Newcastle and the Lords of the Treasury and Admiralty have agreed that the Royal Navy shall keep up communication even with the proposed new settlement in Torres Straits, which will be from six to eight hundred miles nearer to Brisbane than Cambridge Gulf and the other principal harbours of the North-west coast.

Again, the jurisdiction of Queensland already extends over an area of 678,000 square miles, that is, over a territory nearly twice as large as that of Canada, and six times as large as that of the British Isles. The cost of the extension of the machinery of police and justice over this vast surface is enormous in proportion to the existing population. Already, theQueenslanders tax themselves yearly at the rate of £1 per head; that is, they pay (proportionally) above three times as much as the inhabitants of the United Kingdom. Would it be reasonable to expect them to tax themselves still more heavily for the maintenance of the Government of a dependency two thousand miles from their capital; which would entail great expense and trouble on them for several years; and which would be sure to demand separation, so soon as it shall become self-supporting?

Mr. Gregory in 1860 recommended, from his practical knowledge of the country, that the North-western portion of the Australian continent should be formed into a separate Colony, with its capital on the great river Victoria. But, since the home authorities decline to extend a separate Colony to the present under their own auspices, he suggests that the territory marked "Albert" on his map (published at page 59 of the Queensland Parliamentary Papers,) should be temporarily annexed to South Australia, on conditions similar to those under which Carpentaria was annexed to Queensland in March, 1862. Mr. Gregory's proposal is, in short, that as Queensland has taken charge of the North-eastern, so South Australia shall take charge of the North-western portion of the Australian Continent. It appears that this

* See Parliamentary Papers of 1862.
is the arrangement suggested by the features of the country; for Mr. Gregory states that there is a natural frontier at or about the 138th meridian of longitude, which is the boundary of Queensland in that direction. It may be added that much of the territory which it is proposed to name "Albert" (in honor of his late Royal Highness the Prince Consort,) has been explored from Adelaide by Mr. Stuart and others; and that the comparatively limited area of good pastoral land within South Australia forces the squatters of that Colony to look beyond their present boundaries; whereas the vast tracts of available pasture in Queensland will absorb for many years to come the stock and energies of the resident colonists. The Council are sure that neither the Legislature nor the people of Queensland have any desire to evince a grasping or monopolizing spirit.

For the reasons above alleged, and which, it is believed, are identical with the opinions generally held by all the most competent authorities, the Council adhere to the arrangement recommended by Mr. Gregory, and request that His Excellency will be pleased to report this decision to the Secretary of State on behalf of the Government of this Colony.

A. W. MANNING,
Clerk of the Council.

[Enclosure No. 2, in Despatch No. 5.]

Surveyor-General's Office,
Brisbane, 25th November, 1862.

SIR,

In accordance with your Excellency's instructions, I have the honor to submit some remarks and suggestions with reference to the subject of Sir Charles Nicholson's letter to His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, and of the report upon it by Her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners, dated August 19th, 1862.

Since I wrote the Memorandum on the provisional division of the northern portions of the Australian Continent, which appears (as an Enclosure in your Excellency's Despatch of September 30, 1860,) at page 68 of the "Parliamentary Papers relative to Queensland"—very considerable advances have been made in the exploration of the interior; and the results tend only to confirm the opinion then expressed with regard to the best practical adjustment of the lines of demarcation between the several distinct Governments. Sir Charles Nicholson has so fully set forth the desirability of placing the unappropriated territory under the efficient control of either a separate or a contiguous Government, that it is chiefly with reference to the questions raised by the Emigration Commissioners in their report on Sir Charles's letter, that it is necessary to make any remark.

It is recommended that the country in question should be subdivided between the two colonies of Queensland and South Australia, each portion being only temporarily attached, under the condition that it would be eventually erected into a separate colony.

So far as the subdivision of North Australia is concerned, it may be observed that the Emigration Commissioners seem not to be aware that it has been already partially effected by Her Majesty's Government, in the extension of the Western boundary of Queensland from the 141st to the 138th meridian of longitude.

I strongly advise that this arrangement embraces the North-eastern portion of the Australian Continent, subject to the future separation of any large districts in which the inhabitants may be able and willing hereafter to support a separate Government.

The tract of country embracing the North-western portion of the Australian Continent delineated, under the proposed designation of "Albert," on the map which accompanied my Memorandum above referred to,* is defined by boundaries which traverse the least available portions of the territory, thereby avoiding the great inconveniences attendant upon the subdivision of fertile districts which may at some future time be densely populated; and it is scarcely necessary to observe, that if subdivisions thereof were settled under separate Governments, there would be great difficulty in re-connecting the diverse interests which would in the first instance be created, whenever it might eventually be found expedient to consolidate them under a local legislature—the general feeling of Australian communities tending more to subdivision than to annexation.

It is, therefore, submitted that the proposed new colony, embracing the Northern Coast from the 119th to the 138th meridian, and Southward to the 26th degree of latitude, be preserved entire, at least for the present; and that, with a view of facilitating its settlement, and the avoidance of the inconveniences attendant on the unauthorized occupation of any portion of the Continent, it be placed under the control of one of the Governments already established.

In such case, it would be necessary to determine which of the adjacent Colonies could most conveniently undertake the temporary charge.

A superficial glance at the map would perhaps tend to the impression that Western Australia, within the nominal boundary of which a large extent of the proposed new Colony of "Albert" is comprised, would be the first, Queensland the second, and South Australia the third colony in the list, as regards the facilities for local management.

* See Queensland Parliamentary Papers, page 59.

(A.)
(A.) The Colony of Western Australia, however, has not the means at its command to undertake the management of the adjacent province. In support of this assertion, it may be remarked that the Governor lately refused to allow intending settlers to occupy the available country Northward of Shark's Bay, on the ground that such extension would only withdraw capital from the already occupied districts, and assist in the development of country which would practically belong to a different Colony.

(B.) As for Queensland, were it not a question of early action, this Colony would, perhaps, be best able to superintend the occupation of the new province. It must, however, be observed, that the recent separation of Queensland from New South Wales has been accompanied by great exertions to extend the settlement of the unoccupied districts within its own limits, and consequently the energies of the entire population have been so completely absorbed in the development of their vast internal resources that neither population nor stock could be spared for the occupation of country beyond the existing boundaries; and it is highly improbable that the local Legislature would consent to even temporarily advancing any part of the funds required for the development of resources which would be removed from their control almost as soon as created. Moreover, it would be necessary to keep up communication by sea between Brisbane and the North-west Coast, and as yet Queensland possesses no mercantile navy.

(C.) In South Australia may be found the reverse of those conditions which at present exist in Queensland. Instead of vast tracts of pastoral land without sufficient stock to occupy them, the flocks and herds have there increased beyond the capabilities of the comparatively limited area of good pasture which is available for them; consequently, the South Australians have been straining every nerve to discover fresh pastures; and they appear to be prepared to traverse the desert interior to reach the North-west Coast, to attain that object. Indeed, a large portion of this territory, marked "Albert" on my map, has been explored already by them.

It thus becomes highly probable that the South Australian Government and Parliament would be prepared to undertake the management of the new Colony, even at a temporary sacrifice of the public funds, in order to secure the advantages contingent on the occupation of the North-west Coast, which would create an outlet for their surplus stock.

I am, after mature consideration, convinced that the North-western Colony (marked "Albert" in my map) would be most conveniently comprehended within the limits defined in my former Memorandum on this subject, to which I beg leave to refer.*

I feel, moreover, assured that the Colony of Western Australia cannot, and that of Queensland is not likely to consent to undertake the management of the new province, subject to the condition of eventual separation; and that, therefore, the desired objects are more likely to be attained by making it for the present a dependency of South Australia; that is, in the event of the Imperial Government declining to erect it into a separate Colony, and of the Government of South Australia accepting the charge.

I have &c.,

A. C. GREGORY,
Surveyor-General.

To His Excellency Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G.
&c., &c., &c.


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