

No. 48.

The RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF DERBY, K.G., to the GOVERNORS of
VICTORIA, QUEENSLAND, and SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

SIR,

Downing Street, February 24, 1885.

I HAD the honour to address you by telegraph on the 20th instant,* in reply to the offer of the Government of (Victoria), (Queensland), (South Australia), to supply [a naval brigade and†] troops for service in the Soudan, and I have now much pleasure in requesting that you will communicate to your Ministers this fuller expression of the satisfaction and gratitude with which the Queen received the announcement of the generous and patriotic desire of the Colony under your Government to furnish a contingent to Her army.

It would have afforded Her Majesty's Government much gratification if they had been in a position to avail themselves at once of the generous proposals of Victoria, South Australia, and Queensland; but in these cases, as in that of Canada, the probability that the military operations now in progress may be suspended during the hotter months of the summer, has precluded the immediate employment of any force not actually prepared and equipped like that tendered by New South Wales. They will, however, consider carefully and without delay what arrangements may best be made for employing an Australian force at a later period of the year; and I am glad to understand that the question of uniting the colonial contingents into one Australian brigade is being considered.

This is by no means the first occasion on which the Australian Colonies have assisted this country by very liberal contributions, but the desire and the power to offer effective military help in a campaign at a great distance from their shores, of which they have now given such satisfactory proof, marks a distinct and important advance in their political growth.

You are already aware that this fresh evidence of the increasing sympathy and affection of the Australian Colonies for the Mother Country has been received throughout Great Britain with deep emotion and gratification, and it may be confidently hoped that the union which is based upon such sentiments of mutual regard must be close and enduring.

I have, &c.,

The Governors of Victoria, Queensland,
and South Australia.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 49.

The HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR CANADA to COLONIAL OFFICE.

9, Victoria Chambers, London, S.W.,

February 24, 1885.

SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th instant,‡ respecting an offer by Colonel Williams and other Canadian officers to place themselves and regiments at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government for foreign service.

I am obliged to the Earl of Derby for making me acquainted with the correspondence which has taken place between the Colonial Office and the War Office on the subject, and with the reasons which have prevented Her Majesty's Government availing themselves of the offers for the moment.

Copies of the letters will be transmitted to the Canadian Government, and I venture to think that the gratifying expressions contained in the correspondence will be appreciated in the Dominion.

I am, &c.,

The Under Secretary of State for
the Colonies.

(Signed) CHARLES TUPPER.

* No. 34.

† To Victoria only.

‡ No. 39.