

(No. 24.)



1874.

T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

SHIPS OF WAR TO VISIT AUSTRALIAN PORTS.

DESPATCHES.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Chapman, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
July 21, 1874.



CIRCULAR.

Downing-street, 30th August, 1873.

SIR,

I HAVE been in correspondence with the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty on some questions relating to the presence of a Naval Officer when an inquiry is held in a Colony into the circumstances attending the loss of a Merchant Ship.

All persons will no doubt agree that in certain cases it is most desirable that the Court of Inquiry should have such assistance; and, in order to define the position to be held by the Naval Officer sitting as a member of such a Court, I am of opinion that when he does not preside over the Court, he should sit at the right hand of, and so next in seniority to, the President of the Court.

I request you to cause instructions to be given for the adoption of this procedure, unless your Government sees any objection to it, in which case I shall be obliged by your informing me of the nature of such objection.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

KIMBERLEY.

The Officer administering the Government of Tasmania.

If no objection exists to the adoption of the procedure suggested in the Despatch, I shall be glad to receive a memorandum to that effect from Ministers in time for next Mail.

C. D. C.
17. 11. 73.

THERE are at present no Courts of Inquiry in this Colony to investigate the circumstances attending the loss of Merchant Ships; but it is the intention of the Executive Government to introduce legislation on this subject, and a copy of this Despatch has been forwarded to the Honorable the Attorney-General for his guidance.

THOS. D. CHAPMAN.
Colonial Secretary's Office,
22nd November, 1873.

CIRCULAR.

Downing-street, 23rd March, 1874.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to transmit to you for your information a copy of a letter which was addressed by my desire to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, with a copy of their Lordships' reply, on the subject of the occasional visits of one of Her Majesty's ships to the Capitals of the Australasian Colonies.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

CARNARVON.

The Officer administering the Government of Tasmania.

Mr. HERBERT to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

(Copy.)

Downing-street, 6th March, 1874.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Earl of Carnarvon to transmit to you, for the consideration of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, a copy of a Dispatch from Lord Normandy in reply to the Circular from this Department of the 30th August, suggesting that Naval Officers should sit as Members of Courts of Inquiry into the circumstances attending the loss of merchant vessels in Colonial Waters.

Their Lordships will observe from this Dispatch, that whilst the Government of Queensland agrees that in certain cases the assistance of a Naval Officer would be most advantageous, and is willing to accord to him a fitting position as Member of any such Court, it is, nevertheless, impossible to obtain the services of an officer owing to the infrequency of the visits of Her Majesty's Ships of War to the ports of the Colony.

Lord Carnarvon does not doubt that the Lords of the Admiralty will concur with him in the opinion that it is important that Her Majesty's vessels should as often as possible show themselves in the neighbourhood of the British Colonies; and he is certain that the more frequent presence of Her Majesty's vessels in the ports of the Australasian Colonies, other than Sydney, would give great satisfaction to those loyal and prosperous communities.

It appears that since the improvement in the navigation of the River Brisbane has been completed, there is nothing to prevent a vessel of the same draught of water as the "Dido" from anchoring at Brisbane itself.

Lord Carnarvon trusts that, for a short period at least in every year, the various Australian Colonies will be allowed to benefit by the presence at its Capital of one of Her Majesty's Ships of War, and that their Lordships will issue instructions accordingly to the Commodore on the Australian Station.

I am, &c.,

(Signed) R. G. W. HERBERT.

The Secretary to the Admiralty.

Captain HALL to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.

(Copy.)

M

Admiralty, 16 March, 1874.

SIR,

With reference to your letter of 6th instant, representing the expediency of Brisbane as well as all the other Australian Colonies being visited by a ship of war for a short period during each year, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that instructions have been sent to the Commodore to the effect that "their Lordships desire that each of the Colonies should have the benefit of the presence of one of the ships under his orders as frequently as their services can be spared, and the exigencies of the station will admit."

I am, &c.,

(Signed) ROBERT HALL.

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.