

P.S.—Since the foregoing was written a vessel has arrived from Adelaide with flour; also a vessel from Fiji. Both these colonies use articles of agreement similar, or nearly so, to those issued by the Board of Trade. Adelaide also uses certificates of discharge similar to the form sent. I have found an old Sydney agreement, which I also forward, to show that New South Wales does not use the Board of Trade form, and that there is no place for the seaman's receipt of wages on his discharge.—E. C. LAYARD, H.B.M. Consul. 18th December, 1878.

Sub-Enclosure 2 to Enclosure 1 in No. 49.

HENRY ABBOTT MAIR, sworn, states: I have served in the merchant service in the colonies. I once shipped as A.B. on board the "Ivanhoe," in Auckland. I had served before, but had lost my discharge. I was charged 5s. by the Shipping-master for a "permit to ship," besides the usual fee of 2s. for shipping. This occurred in 1874. I have also shipped and signed articles on board the ship itself, without even going before the Shipping-master; and to my positive knowledge it is not an uncommon thing. The occasion I especially allude to I shipped on board the "Prima Donna," Captain Norris, on the 11th August, 1872, one Sunday, in Auckland, and shipment was dated the 12th, as the captain thought, Sunday being a *dies non*, the entry would not be legal.

H. A. MAIR.

Sworn before me, this 16th day of December, 1878, at the British Consulate, Noumea.

E. C. LAYARD,
H.B.M. Consul.

Enclosure 2 in No. 49.

The BOARD of TRADE to Mr. Consul LAYARD, Noumea.

Board of Trade, Marine Department,
Whitehall Gardens, S.W., 7th April, 1879.

SIR,—

Seamen Abroad.

I am directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 17th of December, in continuation of previous despatches on the subject of alleged irregular practices in various colonies of Australia and in New Zealand with regard to the shipping and discharge of seamen.

In reply, I have to inform you that they have caused a copy of your letter to be sent to the Colonial Office, with comments expressing the opinion of this Board upon the following points—namely, (1) engaging seamen on board without proper guarantees that they understand the agreement upon which they enter; (2) depriving seamen of their discharges; (3) charging fees for permits; (4) the absence of a column in agreements for the amount of wages paid on discharge require careful consideration from the colonial authorities.

I am at the same time to point out to you that the regulation of all such matters in a colony with respect to the ships belonging to that colony is completely under the control of the local Governments, and is not subject to the Imperial Merchant Shipping Act.

I am at the same time to inform you that the Government of New South Wales has introduced a Bill into the colonial Legislature "to protect the aboriginal natives of the islands of the Pacific Ocean from imposition when engaging as seamen" when in New South Wales or elsewhere; and that the Governor has decided not to grant any more licenses to Mr. Bell.

I have, &c.,

Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Noumea.

THOMAS GRAY.

No. 50.

COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Hon. Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH to the OFFICER ADMINISTERING the GOVERNMENT of NEW ZEALAND.

(Circular.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 28th April, 1879.

I have the honor to transmit to you, for publication in the colony under your government, copies of the second supplement to the *London Gazette* of the 4th of April, notifying the appointment of a Royal Commission, of which His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has consented to act as President, to promote the success of the International Exhibition to be held in Sydney in 1879, and the International Exhibition to be held in Melbourne in 1880–81.

I have, &c.,

M. E. HICKS BEACH.

The Officer Administering the Government
of New Zealand.