

My Lords trust that it may be found practicable to increase the visits of Her Majesty's ships to South and West Australia. It was the intention of the late Commander-in-Chief to have adopted measures to effect this, so that a ship should be employed on this part of the station for most of the year; but the exigencies of Her Majesty's service prevented his carrying out his intention. My Lords will call the attention of Rear-Admiral Bowden-Smith to the points under consideration; but they do not feel justified in interfering under ordinary circumstances with the disposal of Her Majesty's ships on any station, which must be guided by the requirements of the service.

As regards Lord Kintore's remarks that cruisers could not be stationed in the waters of the contributing colonies from lack of ships, I am to observe that my Lords cannot hold out any hope of an increase in the number of ships on the station.

I am, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

EVAN MACGREGOR.

Enclosure No. 3.

SIR,—

Admiralty, 17th March, 1893.

I have laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your letter of the 7th instant, requesting that directions may be given to the Commander-in-Chief on the Australian station to do all in his power, consistently with the general requirements of the service, to meet the wish of the colonies to receive regular visits from Her Majesty's ships under his orders; and I am to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary of State, that a copy of that letter has been forwarded to Rear-Admiral Bowden-Smith accordingly.

With reference to their Lordships' communication of the 7th February last, pointing out the desirability of more frequent visits to South and West Australia, Victoria, and Tasmania, if arrangements can be made consistently with the disposition he deems best for the general duties of the station, my Lords would observe that since the present Commander-in-Chief has been on the station he has himself visited in his flagship Melbourne, Adelaide, Albany, and Hobart, whilst other vessels of his squadron have recently paid visits to those towns, as well as to Launceston and Freemantle, and other parts of Australia and New Zealand.

I am, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

EVAN MACGREGOR.

Enclosure No. 4.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 6th April, 1893.

I am directed by the Marquis of Ripon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th ultimo (M. 2158), in reply to one from this department of the 7th ultimo, in which it was requested that directions might be given to the Commander-in-Chief on the Australian station to meet the wishes of the Australian Colonies to receive more frequent visits from Her Majesty's ships under his orders, so far as might be consistent with the general requirements of the service.

His Lordship desires me to request that you will convey to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the expression of his thanks for the action taken in the matter, and to state that he has no doubt that Rear-Admiral Bowden-Smith is fully alive to the important and delicate political considerations involved, and that he quite recognises the attention which the Commander-in-Chief has already paid to the wishes of the Australian Colonies in regard to this subject.

I am, &c.,

The Secretary to the Admiralty.

JOHN BRAMSTON.

No. 9.

(Circular.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 10th April, 1893.

I have the honour to transmit to you, for the information of your Government, the accompanying instructions with regard to Bills of health, which have been inserted in the revised edition of the general instructions to Her Majesty's Consuls.

I have, &c.,

The Officer Administering the Government
of New Zealand.

RIPON.

Enclosure.

10. ALTHOUGH the importance attached to bills of health is not so great as was formerly the case, yet they are documents which it is useful for shipmasters to possess, especially in voyages to countries and colonies where a system of strict quarantine is maintained. The local sanitary authorities are the persons whose duty it is to know and report on the health of each port, and the proper local officer to furnish this document is the sanitary authority duly authorised by the Government of the State to issue bills of health.

Her Majesty's Consuls, when it is required for them to do so, are authorised to issue bills of health; they should, as far as possible, follow the form in use at the time by the local sanitary authority. If they have good reason to think that this form does not state accurately the condition of public health, the Consul shall report by telegraph the circumstances to the Foreign Office as