

wealth of Australia for the purpose of enabling the Lords of Her late Majesty's Privy Council resident within the said Commonwealth and in New Zealand to be sworn of the King's Privy Council.

A copy of the letters patent have also been sent to the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

I have, &c.,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

Governor the Right Hon. the Earl of Ranfurly, K.C.M.G., &c.

No. 29.

(Circular.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 15th March, 1901.

Applications continue to be made from time to time to this department for information with regard to the state of the law in the colonies in respect of the authentication of signatures to documents (powers of attorney, for instance) executed in England or elsewhere out of the colonies, with the view of making such documents receivable in the law-courts of the colonies or by public officials and others; and I shall therefore be obliged if you will report to me whether the information on the subject furnished to this department in reply to the Earl of Derby's circular despatch of the 1st March, 1884, is still correct, or, if not, what modifications are necessary.

I have, &c.,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

The Officer Administering the Government of New Zealand.

No. 30.

(No. 35.)

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 21st March, 1901.

I have the honour to inform you that I have submitted for the consideration of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the reserved Bill of the Legislature of New Zealand, entitled "The New Zealand Ensign Act, A.-1, 1901, 1900," copies of which were forwarded in Sir R. Stout's despatch (No. 81) of ^{No. 44.} the 26th October last.

2. Their Lordships are advised that, owing to the use of the words "for all purposes" in the preamble of the Bill, nothing further would be necessary, after the King's assent to the Bill has been signified, to justify the use of the Blue Ensign, with the distinguishing marks mentioned in section 2, as the ensign of the colony for all purposes, *i.e.*, it could be used by merchant vessels belonging to New Zealand.

3. This proposal is one which their Lordships cannot regard with favour, inasmuch as by the Merchant Shipping Act, section 73, the Red Ensign without defacement is declared to be the proper national colours for all ships and boats belonging to any British subject, except in the case of His Majesty's ships and boats, or of any other ship or boat for the time being allowed to wear any other national colours in pursuance of a warrant from His Majesty or from the Admiralty.

4. Colonial merchant ships in some cases have been allowed distinguishing badges of the colony, with the Red Ensign, but the use of the Blue Ensign has been carefully restricted by the Admiralty to ships and vessels whose special character it is desired to make known, such as (a) Ships and vessels in the service of public offices; (b) belonging to and permanently in the service of the colonies; (c) transports. Yachts belonging to certain yacht clubs are also allowed (by warrant) to use it.

5. The only British merchant ships allowed to wear the Blue Ensign are those in receipt of Admiralty subvention, or commanded by retired officers of the Royal Navy, or officers of the Royal Naval Reserve, and having a specified number of Naval Reserve men in the crew.

6. A special Admiralty warrant is required in each case.

7. If, however, the present Bill receives His Majesty's assent as it stands, the necessity of obtaining an Admiralty warrant to fly the Blue Ensign would