

from 'Krisco to Auckland, and was in receipt of a joint subsidy, a tremendous amount of money was lost over the venture. It is therefore apparent that that line of steamers could not be expected to take up the running again unless there is a substantial subsidy from Washington, as well as New Zealand and Australia. To make this service a success, the ships must be able to carry passengers to and fro between Honolulu and San Francisco. No British-owned steamer can carry a single passenger or a ton of cargo between those points either way. So that from the point of view of practical administration it is apparent that there is nothing to be gained in beating the air over what at present seems an impossible position.

"Therefore," continued Sir Joseph, "we must turn our attention to the advantages of the Vancouver service. Brisbane as a port of call stands in the way, but there is no reason why a fast line of steamers should not run between Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Steamers like the U.S.S. Makura, capable of keeping up a speed of 16 or 17 knots per hour, could be maintained. It would not be reasonable to expect the U.S.S. Company to build two or three more steamers like the Makura, and come right on to Auckland unless a sufficient subsidy for a reasonable period of years is provided. Unless Brisbane is omitted, however, that would be of no use to New Zealand. For that reason we will need to establish a close connection at Suva, both ways, with the present line of steamers. This arrangement might be entered into for a time at least, until we can get something better. The matter," added Sir Joseph, "is one of the greatest importance, and will receive the close attention of the Government."

The Premier and the Navy.

The return of the Premier to the Dominion is in itself a matter for public congratulation; but the personal element in to-day's function must be to some extent subordinated to its public importance. The particulars of the Naval Conference with which Sir Joseph Ward has favoured us are of such engrossing public interest that we can safely trust our Premier's own sense of public duty to excuse us for any apparent lack of consideration for him in dealing first with the momentous news that he has brought back to us from England. Our readers will observe in the first place that the scheme for the distribution of the naval forces in the Pacific finally adopted by the Admiralty was in every particular that proposed or approved by Sir Joseph Ward himself. Our Premier justly laid stress upon the fact that the new arrangement entered into between Australia and England, "ipso facto," disposed of the existing naval agreement, and at the same time made it necessary to rearrange the Pacific naval stations in such a way as more effectually to protect our own coasts and our seaborne trade. With this object, Sir Joseph Ward suggested that a section of the China squadron should be stationed in New Zealand waters, and that the naval unit of which our Dreadnought-cruiser is to be the flagship should periodically visit our coasts. Further, in order that an outlet might be afforded to New Zealand's legitimate naval aspirations, the Premier proposed that the warships of this squadron should be as far as possible manned and officered by New Zealanders, and that their pay should be kept up to the colonial level by contributions from the subsidy of £100,000 a year which New Zealand is still to provide for the Imperial navy. To all of these requests the Admiralty acceded, and not the least gratifying feature of the arrangement is the assurance offered by Mr. McKenna that the willingness of the Imperial authorities to fall in with our Premier's proposals was largely due to England's appreciation of the patriotic offer of assistance that Sir Joseph Ward made on behalf of the Dominion during the naval crisis a few months ago.

It should hardly be necessary to emphasise the importance of this new naval agreement, which may indeed ultimately lead to far-reaching consequences beyond the range of our present vision. But for the moment we may be content to point out that not only is the safety of New Zealand better secured than ever before, but the importance of the Dominion as a naval station and its weight as a factor in the Imperial defence scheme have been immensely enhanced. We need not enter into a detailed criticism of Australia's new naval policy just now; though we may still doubt whether the Commonwealth will be able to endure the tremendous pecuniary strain to which it must subject her. But for our present purposes it is only necessary to point out that the establishment of a local navy in Australian waters naturally transfers to New Zealand a great deal of the importance that from the naval standpoint has hitherto attached to Australia as the senior contracting party to the old naval agreement. We believe that the people of New Zealand, when they have had time to reflect upon the situation thus created, will express the most emphatic approval of the course that Sir Joseph Ward has followed in regard to the Australian navy. The reasons advanced by the Premier to justify his refusal to cast in his lot with Australia, and to form with her a joint Australasian navy, appear to us to be unanswerable; and not the least important ground for New Zealand's determination to hold aloof from this project was the danger of subordinating our interests to those of Australia, or submitting to her judgment considerations of vital importance to our own safety. As matters now stand we have the safety of our trade and our coasts amply secured; we have all the advantages that we enjoyed under the old naval agreement, and certain special benefits that we could not have secured without standing alone; and we have succeeded in maintaining our independence as a factor in the policy of the Empire while emphasising our necessary dependence upon England's naval strength and our patriotic determination to make what sacrifices may be needed in the great cause of Imperial defence.

And for all this, as our readers, irrespective of political opinions and prejudices, must now agree, New Zealand owes a heavy and enduring debt of gratitude to Sir Joseph Ward. We have now before us the categorical proof that not only did the Dreadnought offer, for which he was chiefly responsible, strongly predispose the Imperial authorities to make all possible concessions to us in rearranging their scheme of naval defence, but that in almost every particular the arrangement entered into between us and England in regard to the naval stations in the Pacific was suggested by our Premier himself. We congratulate Sir Joseph Ward once more upon the extraordinary success that has attended his efforts on our behalf; and more especially we appreciate the important fact that, while securing so many advantages for the Dominion as regards the composition and distribution of the Pacific naval squadron, he has never lost sight of what we believe to be the cardinal point of a sound Imperial policy—the necessary interdependence of England and her colonies and the need for subordinating the subsidiary naval units to one central control. The consequences of this new arrangement of England's naval forces may yet exercise a far more potent influence upon our own destinies than we can at present conceive. This much at least is certain, that by holding aloof from Australia, and maintaining the old policy of close co-operation with the Imperial authorities, New Zealand has already gained certain valuable advantages; and we may reasonably infer that whatever be the outcome of Australia's new ven-

ture, New Zealand will gain, rather than lose, in prestige and influence through the fact that she now represents in a peculiar and individual sense the traditional naval policy of England in the southern seas. Considering all this, we do not exaggerate the importance of what our Premier has done for the Dominion when we say that no statesman, who has ever represented any British colony at Home has deserved more hearty and enthusiastic recognition for his services than Sir Joseph Ward, and this, we believe, is the general feeling throughout New Zealand to-day.

Political Malignity.

Our attention has been drawn to certain statements which appeared in Friday's issue of the "Dominion," purporting to give an account of Sir Joseph Ward's reception in Auckland; and with every desire to preserve the amenities of journalistic life, we are reluctantly compelled to characterise the "Dominion's" alleged account of the proceedings as for the most part a malignant and unblushing falsehood. The "Dominion" publishes its information as from an Auckland special correspondent; but we would require very specific evidence to convince us that any journalist who witnessed the reception here on Wednesday composed this precious farrago of flagrant absurdities and downright lies. We are told, in the first place, that when the Premier landed "there was a cheer, followed by boings and groans from a large muster said to be Socialists"; that there was "nothing beyond the ordinary afternoon crowd in Queen-street"; that at Albert Park there was "some hand-clapping"; but when the Premier began to speak "there was such a loud outburst of mixed cheering and boing that he could not make himself heard for some minutes." Now, we can attribute such gross and outrageous misstatements only to deliberate malice or absolute ignorance of the facts of the case; and the "Dominion" may choose whichever imputation it likes best. To say that there was only the ordinary muster of the public in Queen-street while the procession was passing is to assert a palpable and circumstantial falsehood. Everybody who was in Queen-street knows that along both sides it was absolutely lined with spectators, who watched the scene not only from the footpaths, but from balconies and windows; and a moderate estimate of the crowd that witnessed the Premier's home-coming fixes the number at somewhere between twenty and thirty thousand. On this subject we are pleased to be able to quote the following extract from our morning contemporary, which will hardly be accused of any prejudice in Sir Joseph Ward's favour. Says the "New Zealand Herald" in its account of the reception:—"Whilst the procession was in progress the tramway service in the city was temporarily suspended. The streets en route were lined with spectators, whose numbers were thicker down near the wharf. Verandahs, shop doors, windows, and roofs, for the whole distance, contained their complement of on-lookers. The large number of persons in Wellesley-street, and in the park itself, made quite an imposing sight." As to the reference to the groaning and boing which was heard at intervals, the "Dominion" has done its best to insinuate that this was the dominant note of the proceedings, and that it represented the general tone of public feeling here. In reply, we appeal again to the "New Zealand Herald," which describes this feature of the proceedings in accurate and carefully guarded terms. When Sir Joseph reached Albert Park, the "N.Z. Herald" tells us that "here a cordial reception awaited him from the rest of the committee and the general public." When the Premier rose to speak, the "N.Z. Herald" informs us that "he was received with cheers that effectually drowned the efforts of the discontents to raise a counter demonstration." Further, the "N.Z. Herald," describing the same scene is careful to point out that the "boing" which was occasionally heard during the afternoon was due to "a section of the audience representing the Socialist and other extreme sections of the community," but it honestly admits that "the counter-cheering eventually quelled the unruly element." There is nothing in the "N.Z. Herald's" account to suggest more or less than the truth, that the whole ceremony was

imposing and successful, that the Premier had a cordial reception, and that the only discordant element was supplied by a very small minority of the hoodlums, who find a mysterious joy in howling down speakers at public meetings everywhere in the world. We leave our readers to judge between the "Dominion" and the "New Zealand Herald." But we protest most vigorously against the aspersion of our city by foul and malignant libels; and we protest further against the injury done to the dignity and reputation of New Zealand journalism by such vindictive misrepresentations. Even the fact that policemen were stationed along the route to keep back the crowd—a precaution that we need hardly say is an everyday occurrence in every civilised country—is distorted by the "Dominion" to serve its own unworthy ends; for the "Auckland special correspondent," who is made answerable for this painfully imaginative effusion, can hardly have invented the heading, "Police again in Evidence," under which it appears. Having placed the grounds for our opinion before our readers, we repeat that this bogus account of the Premier's reception is a deliberate perversion of fact, as dishonourable to the political reputation of the Opposition as it is disgraceful to the journal that perpetrated it.

A Remarkable Tour.

The Premier of the Dominion, Sir Joseph Ward, speaking to a "Star" representative after the arrival of the Challenger, spoke very highly of the kindness he received from Captain Da Costa and the officers of this warship. Sir Joseph was accompanied by Lady Ward, Miss Ward, Miss Seddon, Dr. Pritchett, Solicitor-General of the Dominion, and Mr. Hislop (private secretary). The trip was a most enjoyable one, and only occupied seventy hours from the Fiji port, an average of something over seventeen knots an hour being maintained by Engineer-Commander Grant and his capable staff.

Sir Joseph Ward said that leaving New Zealand as he did on the 18th June, he had in the short space of 102 days encircled the globe. Out of that period 26 days were spent in London, and the balance (76) in travel. There had been no stop on the road home. From the day of his arrival in Sydney until joining the train in Marseilles for Calais immediately after the arrival of the steamer there, and indeed until his arrival in London, it has been an unbroken travel. The work connected with the Conference was completed only late on the evening of the 20th August, and the following morning at 10 o'clock he left by train to join the steamer Campania at Liverpool, sailing that afternoon for New York. He spent one day in Montreal to meet by appointment the British Ambassador of America, who had travelled a very long distance through America to see him there.

A couple of days were spent at Ottawa, where an opportunity was afforded of discussing public matters with Sir Wilfrid Laurier. On the road to Vancouver a stay of one night was made at Niagara Falls, this being the only diversion, and that for a short period of three hours only, in the whole journey. From the beginning of the trip until its completion the greatest interest was taken in the representative of New Zealand, and many courtesies were extended to him. This Sir Joseph naturally took as a compliment to the people of New Zealand expressed through himself. Upon arrival at Fiji a short stay of a couple of hours only was made, and the Challenger was then joined, an immediate start being made for New Zealand.

Every effort was made by Sir Joseph to get back earlier, but the work of the Conference, highly important as it was, rendered it impossible for him to leave London sooner than he did.

Referring to the interview that Sir Joseph had already given on the subject of naval defence, he said that he had every respect for those who differed from the opinions he held as to the importance of our adhering to the British Navy proper. It was quite clear to him that if by any mischance the British Navy in a contest was, so to speak, to break at the centre small local navies at the ends would be of very little service indeed for the protection of their respective countries. The proper course, therefore, to follow was to as-