

No. 7.

COMMODORE SEYMOUR TO GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE GREY.

“Pelorus,” at Sydney,
17th April, 1862.

SIR,—

Captain Jenkins, of Her Majesty's ship “Miranda,” has forwarded to me a copy of a letter addressed to him by your Excellency, dated 1st April, 1862, in which you complain of your not having been in any way consulted by me regarding the exigencies of the service in New Zealand previous to my issuing certain orders to the commanding Officers of Her Majesty's ships in that part of the station, and of your consequently having been placed in a position which, looking to the important interests entrusted to your care, is one which you ought not to occupy.

2. I regret extremely that your Excellency should have been under the necessity of placing such a statement on record.

3. The circumstances which have led to this complaint on the part of your Excellency are, I imagine, my having sent peremptory orders to Captain Jenkins of the “Miranda,” to repair here with all despatch immediately on the intelligence of the anticipated rupture between Great Britain and the Federal States reaching me.

4. I have already had the honor of furnishing your Excellency with my reasons for taking that step, and have communicated them to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

5. I have reason to believe that your Excellency disapproves of my having ordered the “Fawn” to remain in the vicinity of Auckland, or at all events to confine her cruises to the ports of the Northern Island, during the time that we were still uncertain as to what might be the termination of the dispute between Great Britain and the Federal States. My object in issuing that order was not to cramp your Excellency's movements in any way, but to ensure her being in a position to receive the orders which I should have sent to her, had the dispute terminated otherwise than it did; and I beg to remind your Excellency that, immediately on hearing of its settlement, I ordered Commander Cator to convey you to any port in New Zealand you might wish to visit, and that Sir Malcolm MacGregor is acting under similar instructions at present.

6. But if your Excellency objects to my having ordered the “Miranda” and “Fawn” over here after the 25th of March, without previous consultation with you, I must call to your recollection that I had the honor to inform you, by letters dated the 12th and 15th ultimo, of the arrangements which I proposed to make with regard to the Naval Force in New Zealand after the meeting which was appointed to be held on the 25th ultimo had taken place, and of the nature of the orders given by me to Captain Jenkins in the event of hostilities not being imminent afterwards. I had also the honor of informing you of my reasons for giving these orders, and of telling you that I was under the necessity of reducing the Naval Force in New Zealand to one ship, in consequence of the demands made upon me from other quarters, and that the vessel which would be stationed there would be placed at your disposal for your conveyance to any part of the Colony which you might wish to visit. I cannot, therefore, accuse myself of having treated your Excellency with any want of consideration or courtesy. Naval protection has never been denied New Zealand when it has been really required, but the desertion from Her Majesty's ships on that station has reached such an alarming pitch (as detailed in a separate communication which I have the honor to forward), that even if their services had not been required elsewhere, I must have removed the majority of the ships from New Zealand, unless hostilities were imminent, and if I may judge by the tenor of the letter addressed to your Excellency by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the 4th of December, 1861, my doing so would have met the approval of my superiors.

7. I must also beg to call your Excellency's notice to the fact that the best proof I can give of my anxiety to meet your wishes in every way is, that on the very day (the 25th of March) on which you had expressed a wish to see a Naval Force concentrated in New Zealand waters three of Her Majesty's ships were at anchor in Auckland Harbour, while the fourth, the “Pelorus,” bearing my Broad Pendant, was employed on a duty which the Secretary of State for the Colonies was anxious to have executed without delay. It was impossible for me to do more, and I must also remind you that I had expressly ordered Captain Jenkins to retain both the “Miranda” and “Fawn” in New Zealand if there was a probability of recourse being had to arms to carry out your Excellency's policy. It was in order to ascertain if such was likely to be the case that Captain Jenkins addressed his letter to you, dated the 1st of April, and if your Excellency had called upon him there for assistance in hostile operations, the “Miranda” and “Fawn” would now be in New Zealand instead of in the Harbour of Port Jackson.

I have, &c.,

His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B.,
&c., &c., &c.

F. BEAUCHAMP SEYMOUR.

No. 8.

COPY OF A DESPATCH FROM GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE GREY TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF
NEWCASTLE.

Auckland, 8th March, 1862.

MY LORD DUKE,—

Adverting to my Despatch, No. 12 of the 8th ultimo, in which I called attention to the fact that all Her Majesty's vessels but the “Fawn” had been removed from these Islands, and that such