

as proposed in Sir James Lorimer's memorandum of the 25th July, 1889, but that they are favourable to any arrangement which may be entered into, with my approval, for lending officers of the local forces of Victoria to Her Majesty's ships for a short course of instruction when available accommodation can be provided.

2. Under these circumstances, I beg to acquaint you that one officer can be received in the "Rapid" and one in the "Royalist" for a period of three to six months' instruction. These officers will not be able to take charge of a watch, or perform responsible duties. They must also abstain from communicating with the public press under the same Queen's Regulations that govern the conduct of officers in Her Majesty's ships, and of which I enclose a copy.

3. Should this proposal meet with your concurrence, the officers selected could be received about the 1st April next, and I would suggest that they should wait upon the commanding officers of the "Rapid" and "Royalist" on the arrival of those ships at Melbourne early in March, to ascertain details as to messing, &c.

I have, &c.,

C. T. Scott,

Rear-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.

His Excellency the Earl of Hopetoun, G.C.M.G.,
Governor and Commander-in-Chief.

Extract from "Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions."

ARTICLE 637.—"All persons belonging to the fleet are forbidden to write for any newspaper on subjects connected with the naval service, or to publish or cause to be published, directly or indirectly, in a newspaper or other periodical any matter or thing relating to the public service."

(4.) The MINISTER OF DEFENCE to the PREMIER.

(Memorandum.)

Defence Department, Melbourne, 21st March, 1890.

In view, however, in future, of other officers from the Victorian naval forces being sent to Her Majesty's ships for a course of instruction, I would point out that the difficulty in procuring for them the training and experience in the duties of a man-of-war which are most required is not fully met by the privilege now accorded.

It was particularly pointed out in the memorandum of my predecessor above referred to that, although the officers entered in the Permanent Naval Force have already acquired considerable experience at sea in the merchant service, they are deficient in the training required for the management of men, and for organization and discipline generally, as well as for the performance of their duties as officers in charge of watches.

Rear-Admiral Lord Charles Scott states, in his letter to His Excellency the Governor, that the officers lent from the local forces of Victoria will not be able to take charge of a watch, or perform responsible duties. As our officers can be locally instructed in their drills, the further training required is more particularly in the discharge of those responsible duties which His Excellency the Rear-Admiral states could not be intrusted to them.

I would respectfully urge a further consideration of this question, and that a representation may be made to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty with a view to their agreement, under certain conditions, to the removal of these restrictions.

It is very desirable that advantage should be taken of the advent of the ships of the new Australian Squadron, subsidised by the colonies, to increase for the officers of the colonial naval forces the opportunities of training and instruction on board Her Majesty's ships.

I should strongly advocate the consideration of a scheme by which such opportunities would be conferred on officers both of the permanent naval forces and of the reserves.

Special facilities are now being granted in England to officers of the Royal Naval Reserve to be borne on Her Majesty's ships for courses of instruction, and the rules regulating their duties when on board might equally be extended to officers of the colonial naval forces.

The officers of the Victorian Permanent Naval Force are required, before entry, to have gained a master's certificate from the Mercantile Marine, and are therefore qualified to take charge of vessels.

If the legal position of these officers on board Her Majesty's ships, as affecting discipline, is one reason that precludes them from performing responsible duties, I would suggest that the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty be moved to give full consideration to the question of arriving at a satisfactory determination of the status of colonial officers when serving in Her Majesty's ships.

Unless some arrangement, as requested, can be effected, there would appear to be no other way of affording to the officers of the colonial navy an opportunity of acquiring the experience that is considered requisite to fit them to thoroughly discharge the duties that may be required of them.

JAMES BELL, Minister of Defence.

(5.) MEMORANDUM for His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

Premier's Office, Melbourne, 25th March, 1890.

THE Premier presents his duty to your Excellency, and has the honour to return herewith His Excellency Rear-Admiral Lord Charles Scott's letter of the 28th January last (dated 25th July, 1889, No. 1231), communicating the views of the Admiralty on a proposal made by the Hon. the Minister of Defence for enabling officers of the local forces to obtain training and experience on board Her Majesty's ships on the Australian Station.

2. The Government accepts the offer to receive one officer on board the "Rapid" and one on board the "Royalist" for a period of six months. Arrangements will accordingly be made for two officers to join the ships named during the second week in April, which is as early a date as possible after the annual Easter training, for which their services are required. The officers will be duly instructed to comply with the Queen's Regulations as regards communication with the public Press.

3. Mr. Gillies now asks that your Excellency will be pleased to convey the thanks of this