

Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that Your Excellency may be pleased to place this their petition before His Most Gracious Majesty King Edward the Seventh. Your petitioners realise that His Majesty has during his reign gained a proud pre-eminence for his noble efforts to promote peace and good will not only throughout his vast Empire, but among all nations.

They pray that Your Excellency may be pleased to recommend His Majesty to withhold his assent from the Bill which Your Excellency has been pleased to reserve for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure, and that your petitioners may be granted such further or other relief as to His Majesty may seem meet.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

No. 37.

(No. 13.)

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, 17th March, 1908.

It is with much satisfaction that I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a memorandum, which I have received from my Prime Minister, stating that the New Zealand Government propose to increase the subsidy made by this Dominion to the Imperial Navy from £40,000 to £100,000 per annum.

2. Your Lordship will observe that my Government, in making this announcement, expressly state that, realising the vital importance to New Zealand and the Empire generally of the Imperial Navy being under the sole control of those responsible for its direction, they do not seek to suggest any conditions regarding the location of His Majesty's Ships in these waters.

I have, &c.,

PLUNKET.

The Earl of Elgin,
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Enclosure.

Memorandum for His Excellency the Governor.

Prime Minister's Office, Wellington, 16th March, 1908.

THE Prime Minister presents his compliments, and desires that His Excellency will inform the Imperial authorities that the New Zealand Government proposes to increase its subsidy to the Australian-New Zealand squadron to the sum of £100,000 per annum after the 1st October next. This date is so fixed in order to give Parliament an opportunity of ratifying what is now proposed.

Recognising how important it is for the protection of the Empire that the navy should be at the absolute disposal of the Admiralty, Your Excellency's Advisers do not desire to suggest any conditions as to the location of the ships, as they are confident that the truest interests of the people of New Zealand will be best served by having a powerful navy under the independent control of those responsible for directing it in times of peace or war. What the Government does feel concerned in is that the navy, in whatever part of the world it may be, should be under one control, so that the most effective results for the defence of all portions of the Empire may be assured.

It may not be found convenient to alter the present naval agreement, but the £60,000 additional proposed will be paid to the British Government whether the agreement is altered or not. If it is considered necessary to alter the present agreement, Your Excellency's Advisers will be glad to know in what direction this should be done.

J. G. WARD.

No. 38.

(No. 14.)

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, 17th March, 1908.

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a memorandum, which I have received from my Prime Minister, requesting that, if an opportunity presents itself, this Government should be given the option of acquiring from the Admiralty an obsolete man-of-war for the purpose of training young men for the Imperial Navy and the Mercantile Marine.

2. The facilities, which have been given by my Government to youths for taking up a seafaring life through the New Zealand Training Ship "Amokura" (late H.M.S. "Sparrow"), are undoubtedly appreciated, and the numerous applications to join that vessel go to prove that a Ship with more accommodation is urgently needed.