

competent for Us, our heirs and successors, to make such additions as, under exceptional circumstances, We may deem fitting.

Sixthly: Recipients of the Second Class of the decoration shall be eligible for advancement to the First Class as vacancies may arise.

Seventhly: Recipients of the First Class of the decoration shall be designated "Members of the Royal Red Cross," and shall be entitled to the letters R.R.C. following their names. Recipients of the Second Class of the decoration shall be designated "Associates of the Royal Red Cross," and shall be entitled to the letters A.R.R.C. following their names.

Eighthly: It shall be competent for Us, our heirs and successors, to confer either class of the decoration upon any ladies, whether subjects or foreign persons, who may be recommended to our notice by our Secretary of State for War as having voluntarily undertaken the duties of establishing, conducting, or assisting in hospitals for the treatment of sick and wounded soldiers and sailors of our Army and Navy, or of our Indian Military Forces, or of the Naval and Military Forces of our self-governing dominions beyond the seas, or as having performed valuable services with the Red Cross or kindred societies at home or abroad, or as having otherwise rendered eminent services in the care of sick and wounded soldiers and sailors of our Army and Navy; and it is hereby ordained that all persons appointed under this clause shall be regarded as honorary members or associates, and their appointments shall be additional to the establishment ordained in the fifth clause of this our Royal Warrant.

Ninthly: The names of those upon whom We may be pleased to confer the decoration shall be published in the *London Gazette*, and a registry thereof kept in the office of our Secretary of State for War.

Tenthly: In order to make such additional provision as shall effectually preserve pure this honourable distinction, it is ordained that if any person on whom such distinction shall be conferred shall by her conduct become unworthy of it, her name shall be erased, by an order under the Royal Sign-manual, from the register of those upon whom the said decoration shall have been conferred. And it is hereby declared that We, our heirs and successors, shall be the sole judge of the conduct which may require the erasure from the register of the name of the offending person, and that it shall at all times be competent for Us, our heirs and successors, to restore the name if such restoration should be justified by the circumstances of the case.

Lastly: We reserve to ourself, our heirs and successors, full power of annulling, altering, abrogating, augmenting, interpreting, or dispensing with these regulations, or any part thereof, by a notification under the Royal Sign-manual.

Given at our Court, at St. James's, this 10th day of November, 1915, in the sixth year of our reign.

War Office, 16th November, 1915.

By His Majesty's command.

H. H. ASQUITH.

No. 15.

New Zealand, No. 25.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 12th January, 1916.

With reference to my predecessor's despatch, No. 264, of the 21st May, 1915, I have the honour to request Your Excellency to inform your Ministers that I have been approached by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty as to the issue of some general instructions upon the question of exempting His Majesty's ships and vessels employed in the service of the Crown from the payment of dues in British ports outside the United Kingdom. A.—1, 1917,
No. 7.

2. I think it is probable that the general privilege of exemption accorded to His Majesty's ships is recognized in the ports of the Dominion as far as possible, if not altogether. However, I shall be glad if your Ministers will take the matter into consideration, with a view to arranging, so far as local law permits, for the issue of instructions that, subject to the qualifications hereinafter set out, no dues should be levied on vessels engaged in the service of the Crown.

3. The consideration of this matter has called attention to a doubt which arises on the wording of the Admiralty instructions embodied in my predecessor's despatch of the 21st May, respecting the charges to be levied on prize or detained vessels in certain cases. In the subhead marked (b) under paragraph 2 of that despatch you will observe that the obligation to pay port dues was specifically prescribed for prizes or detained ships doing work which would otherwise be done by the mercantile marine, but the application of the same rule with regard to (a) and (c) under paragraph 2 was not made clear.

4. Accordingly I now desire to explain that, while prize or detained ships actually engaged on Government service should, like His Majesty's ships, be exempt from all pilotage, light, and harbour dues (*ex gratia* payments being,