

Letter of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, as such a course would only tend to elicit debate, and would afford no assistance towards the solution of the general problem.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) W. DENISON.

The Right Honorable
Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, Bart.,
&c., &c., &c.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WITH RESPECT TO THE DEFENCE OF THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

Extract from Minute No. 58-31, dated 2nd August, 1858.

(Enclosure.)

Present :—

His Excellency the Governor General,
The Honorable the Vice President of the Council,
The Honorable the Attorney General,
The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer,
The Honorable the Secretary for Lands and Public Works.

His Excellency the Governor General lays before the Council, a Despatch from Sir Henry Young, Governor of Tasmania, enclosing at the request of his Responsible Advisers, a Copy of a Despatch which he has recently transmitted to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and also a Copy of a Letter addressed to him by those Gentlemen on the subject of the Defence of Tasmania and the Australian Colonies generally, in time of War.

In this Despatch, which is based upon the Letter of his Advisers, Sir Henry Young strongly urges upon the Secretary of State, the necessity for making the Australian Colonies an Admiral's Station, and for maintaining in these Seas, a Naval Squadron equal at least to that maintained therein by any other Power, and the object of the present reference to this Government, is to invite the Colony to strengthen that representation by a similar expression of opinion.

Sir Henry Young's Despatch and the Letter of his Ministers also, open up other questions connected with the Defence of the Australian Colonies, but these the Governor General is not at present prepared to submit for the consideration of the Council, and His Excellency only now desires their advice as to the propriety of adopting and acting upon the specific suggestion of the Tasmanian Government.

The Council are not disposed to lay so great a stress as it would appear Sir Henry Young and his Advisers do, upon the presence in these Seas of a sufficient Force to justify the adoption of the step advocated by them, and are not therefore prepared to recommend that any representation should be addressed to Her Majesty's Government on behalf of this Colony, urging the necessity for making the Australian Colonies an Admiral's Station. They are, however, of opinion that the Naval Force at present stationed in these Colonies, consisting, as it does, of only two available Vessels, is not in any way adequate to the protection, either in Peace or War, of British and Colonial interests, and they recommend that His Excellency should bring this expression of opinion under the notice of Her Majesty's Government, and urge the expediency of strengthening that Force.

(Signed) EDWARD C. MEREWETHER.
Clerk of the Council.

MR. OSBORNE, TO MR. MERIVALE.

Admiralty, S.W.,
24th January, 1857.

SIR,—

Having laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Letter of the 23rd ult., enclosing a Despatch from Sir W. Denison on the subject of the Naval and Military Defence of New South Wales, and the portion of the expense thereof to be borne by that Colony, I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you for the information of Mr. Secretary Labouchere, that they are glad to have received this Despatch *in extenso*, because, although a considerable portion of it refers only to Military matters, that portion of the subject is very important in its bearings upon the general question, and although Sir W. Denison's Despatch relates to New South Wales only, the question of the Service to be performed by Her Majesty's Naval and Military Forces for Colonial Defences, and Colonial purposes generally, is, in fact, raised by this Despatch. (Enclosure.)

It is not the province of this Department to enter into the question, as regards the principle as to whether any, or what part of the expense for defence against an enemy, is to be borne by the Mother Country and the Colonies respectively, and my Lords will therefore abstain from any comment on Sir W. Denison's Despatch, and proceed to the consideration of the question, only so far as regards the