

No. 81.

COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Hon. Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH to the OFFICER ADMINISTERING the GOVERNMENT of NEW ZEALAND.
(Circular.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 21st October, 1879.

I have the honor to transmit to you a copy of a Commission passed under the Royal sign manual and signet, appointing the Right Honorable the Earl of Carnarvon; the Right Honorable H. C. E. Childers, M.P.; Sir H. T. Holland, Baronet, M.P., K.C.M.G.; Admiral Sir Alexander Milne, G.C.B.; General Sir J. L. A. Simmons, G.C.B.; Sir Henry Barkly, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.; Thomas Brassey, Esq., M.P.; and Robert George Crookshank Hamilton, Esq., to be Commissioners to inquire into the state of the defences of the more important colonial ports and naval stations, and the best mode of placing them in a thoroughly secure condition.

2. The Committee appointed by Her Majesty's Government in the early part of last year to inquire and report as to the defences of those ports which might stand most in need of defence in any sudden emergency, made considerable progress in the examination of the subject referred to them, and in pursuance of their recommendations much has been already done towards the provision of such temporary defences as appeared to be most urgently required; but the larger questions connected with the permanent defences of each place have, in most cases, yet to be considered. The Royal Commission which is the subject of the present communication has been appointed to deal with these questions, and Her Majesty's Government are confident that you will use every effort to insure that any information affecting the colony under your government, which may be necessary to assist the Commission in the prosecution of its labours, shall be promptly and carefully supplied.

3. It is, of course, not the intention of Her Majesty's Government, by the appointment of this Commission, to interfere in any way with the measures already taken in the colony under your government for providing an adequate system of defence. They recognize with great satisfaction the intelligence and public spirit with which this responsibility has been assumed, and the cordiality with which, in most cases, the recommendations, made after careful inquiry, have been adopted.

4. There are probably, however, many further points in regard to which the Commission, after considering the detailed local information which you may be able to place at its disposal, may render most valuable assistance to your Government, and I am fully satisfied that the ability and special experience of its members will secure for its recommendations, and for such proposals as Her Majesty's Government may found upon those recommendations, the most cordial and earnest consideration.

I have, &c.,

M. E. HICKS BEACH.

The Officer Administering the Government
of New Zealand.

Enclosure in No. 81.

DRAFT of a COMMISSION appointing the Right Honourable the Earl of Carnarvon; the Right Honourable H. C. E. Childers, M.P.; Sir H. T. Holland, Bart., M.P., K.C.M.G.; Admiral Sir Alexander Milne, Bart., G.C.B.; General Sir J. L. A. Simmons, G.C.B., Inspector-General of Fortifications and Director of Works; Sir Henry Barkly, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.; Thomas Brassey, Esq., M.P.; and Robert George Crookshank Hamilton, Esq., Accountant-General of the Navy and Comptroller of Navy Pay, to be Commissioners to inquire into the State of the Defences of the more important Colonial Ports and Coaling Stations, and to consider the apportionment of the cost of such Defences; and Captain Herbert Jekyll, R.E., to be Secretary to the said Commissioners.

VICTORIA, by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, to Our Right Trusty and Right Well-beloved Cousin and Councillor Henry Howard Molyneux, Earl of Carnarvon; Our Right Trusty