

the other hand, never hinted that the increase should be exclusively a charge upon the colonies. I am given to understand the present Premier of Tasmania takes the same view of the financial state of the case as proposed by Victoria—contribution by Her Majesty's Government to provide in the first instance the vessels referred to in the Admiral's memorandum, £626,000; but as these vessels would belong to Her Majesty's Government, the real cost would be the loss by deterioration, which, if estimated at 5 per cent., equals £31,300 per annum; the contribution by the colonies, maintenance on war footing, £153,000 per annum; maintenance on peace footing, £90,000 per annum.

Melbourne, 5th May, 1886.

D. GILLIES,
Premier.

No. 33.

The ADMINISTRATOR of the GOVERNMENT, Queensland, to the GOVERNOR of NEW ZEALAND.

SIR,—

7th May, 1886.

I have the honour to enclose three copies of a memorandum dated the 3rd May, 1886, expressing the opinion of my Ministers on the subject of a scheme of naval defence for the Australasian Colonies.

I have, &c.,
A. H. PALMER.

His Excellency Major-General Sir W. F. D. Jervois, R.E., G.C.M.G., C.B., &c.

Enclosure.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Brisbane, 3rd May, 1886.

With reference to His Excellency Sir Anthony Musgrave's minute of the 20th February, 1886, transmitting for the information and consideration of Ministers a circular despatch from Admiral Tryon, dated the 24th December, 1885, on the subject of a scheme of naval defence for the Australasian Colonies, Mr. Griffith has now the honour to state for your Excellency's information the opinion of this Government on the subject.

2. It having for various reasons been proved to be impracticable to bring about the meeting of Governors and Premiers of the several colonies for the purpose of discussing the matter with the Admiral, as proposed by the Secretary of State, Mr. Griffith, at Admiral Tryon's invitation, proceeded to Sydney, where he met Sir P. A. Jennings and Mr. Gillies, the leaders of the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria, with whom and the Admiral the matter was fully discussed in meetings held on board the "Nelson" on the 26th and 27th of April.

3. The Admiralty proposal, made through the Admiral, may be shortly stated as follows:—

- (a.) That the purely local naval defence force which has already been created in several colonies should remain substantially on the footing on which it is already established.
- (b.) That any sea-going vessels that may be provided, equipped, and maintained at the cost of the colonies should be manned by the Admiralty, and be placed in every respect on the same footing as are Her Majesty's vessels at present belonging to the station, including a periodical change of officers and men.
- (c.) That the vessels provided at the cost of the colonies should be retained within the limits of the Australasian seas.
- (d.) That no reduction of the forces now on the station should take place consequent on the addition of any force made at the cost of the colonies.
- (e.) That the entire cost of any additional vessels should be borne by the colonies.
- (f.) That an increased number of cadetships should be given to the colonies.
- (g.) That during time of peace these vessels should be employed in the same way as other vessels of war on the station.
- (h.) That any arrangement made should be for a period of ten years.
- (i.) That the several colonies should still continue to arrange for local defence, and that any sea-going vessels of war added to the squadron on the station should not be subject to any divided responsibility as to their movements within Australasian waters, but should form part of the squadron, and be entirely under the control of the Admiral Commanding-in-Chief.
- (j.) That the additional ships to be provided should be five cruisers of the "Archer" class, and two fast sea-going torpedo-vessels.

4. From the corrected data supplied by Admiral Tryon at the meeting, it appears that the first cost of each cruiser of the "Archer" class would be £106,486, and of each torpedo-vessel £46,729; while the entire annual expenses of each of the former would be £25,456, and of the latter £11,029.

The total cost of providing such a fleet as that proposed by the Admiral would therefore be—For five cruisers, £532,430; for two torpedo-vessels, £93,458: total, £625,888. And the annual expenses of maintenance would be—For five cruisers, £127,280; for two torpedo-vessels, £22,058: total, £149,338. To which must be added the sum of £3,300 mentioned in the seventh paragraph of the Admiral's despatch for the cost of exchange of crews.

5. Upon full consideration, Ministers are of opinion that it is not desirable that any ships to be provided under the proposed scheme should be the joint property of the colonies; and they think that it would be highly inconvenient that the several colonies should be called upon to raise by way of loan sums for the purchase of vessels which would be the property of Her Majesty's Imperial Government. They think, therefore, that the ships should be provided and equipped by the Imperial Government. They are, however, of opinion that the colonies may fairly be called upon to