

to favourably consider a suggestion made by me—that all seals' skins procured in New Zealand waters should be branded, in order to diminish the likelihood of seals caught in proscribed waters being passed off as New Zealand skins. Perhaps my suggestion may be worthy of consideration.

I have, &c.,
ISLINGTON,
Governor.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Crewe, K.G., P.C., &c.,
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Enclosure.

Memorandum for His Excellency the Governor.

26th August, 1910.

In my memorandum to Your Excellency on the subject of pelagic sealing, for cable reply to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, it was not convenient to set out the reasons for not being able to comply with the suggestion of the British Government, as I should have been glad to have done but for the circumstances connected with the sealing industry of this Dominion.

The proposal to close our sealing season for fifteen years came to us when we had already completed fifteen years of continuous close seasons, which closure had been made advisedly in order to protect and preserve the industry. During the whole of that period many representations were made urging the Government to remove the bar and to open the sealing-grounds, which we regularly declined to do, intimating in some instances that after a further period we would favourably consider the removal of the restriction then existing. During the last twelve months matters reached the point when we were on the verge of opening the season, and, with a view to having sealing carried on systematically, we publicly advertised for tenders for the right of sealing at the Auckland Islands and at other parts under the control of the New Zealand Government. We at the same time intimated that we proposed to have our own officer, at the Auckland Islands at least, to see that the regulations under which sealing could be carried on were being properly observed. So that the suggestion to close for a further period of fifteen years would mean that for thirty years in all our sealing-grounds would be closed, so far at least as the people of this Dominion are concerned. I may add that during the last fifteen years it has been frequently represented that, while the sealing-grounds were closed to New-Zealanders, outside vessels were visiting the Auckland Islands and other parts for seals, and that poaching was being carried on to a very considerable extent. Though we have not actual proof of this, there is a good deal of circumstantial evidence which leads us to believe these statements are warranted. The vessels, which were in these waters ostensibly for whaling, did not come from Australia or New Zealand, but from more distant countries; and the matter has given a good deal of concern at different times to the New Zealand Government. While anxious to meet the wishes of the British Government, it will be seen that there are reasons which make it difficult to do so in this particular instance.

J. G. WARD.

No. 27.

New Zealand, No. 110.

MY LORD,— Government House, Wellington, 2nd September, 1910.

In reply to your Lordship's despatch of the 30th June last, No. 136, I have the honour to inform you that the Secretary of the Anti-Opium Association has been notified as requested in the last paragraph of your despatch.

I have, &c.,
ISLINGTON,
Governor.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Crewe, K.G., P.C., &c.,
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

No. 28.

New Zealand, No. 111.

MY LORD,— Government House, Wellington, 9th September, 1910.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch, No. 106, of the 19th May last, on the subject of the Bill introduced into the last session of the Parliament of New Zealand by Mr. McLaren to amend the law with respect to accidents at sea.