

Forces was near me, so that if difficulties should arise from the orders I had given, they could at the last moment be varied.

14. In answer to General Chute's letters of the 20th and 23rd of April, I wrote to him on the 10th of May and on the 21st of May, pointing all this out in language I believe at once earnest and becoming, and informing him that I adhered to the determination in this respect which my duty required me to adopt. General Chute, however, did not come to Wellington until the 29th of June. This accounts for the delay of the first two months. It is for your Lordship now to decide upon whom the blame for this part of the delay rests.

15. When General Chute arrived at Wellington, I understood in the most distinct manner that, the winter season having set in, no further embarkation of troops from the Colony would be allowed to be proceeded with until September. I think I shall be able to send your Lordship by this mail a notification which, in fact, amounted to an official one, which appeared in the Auckland papers before General Chute left Auckland, which positively stated that this was the line of proceeding to be followed, and I thought it upon the whole a reasonable one, and acted upon it, and made all my plans so that at the end of August, the arrangements for the departure of troops from the Colony might again go on.

16. In confining the questions upon this subject to the delay in moving troops between the 20th April and the 18th August, for which I think I have satisfactorily accounted, the real questions are lost sight of,—why were these troops not moved even before the previous November? Why has General Chute, by persisting in residing at fifteen days' distance in time from the Seat of Government, prevented the Local Government from working out its own safety by means of its own Local Forces and resources, by the delay thrown in the way of the movement of these forces.

17. Your Lordship observes that General Chute wrote to me on the 20th April, requesting to be at once permitted to withdraw Her Majesty's Troops from the outposts in each district, and to concentrate them at the chief towns, viz., Wanganui, New Plymouth, and Auckland, and if I should think necessary, at Wellington or Napier. But when General Chute made that request, he, although in command of Her Majesty's Colonial Forces, as well as Her Majesty's Regular Forces, was fifteen days' distance from me in point of time, persistently refusing to have his Head Quarters at the Seat of Government, and he knew that I would not venture to give orders on such important movements, any one of which might, from some change in the position of the enemy, or in the circumstances of the country, bring on fresh disturbances, until he was at the Seat of Government.

18. I trust your Lordship will consider my letters to General Chute of the 10th and 21st of May, copies of which are herewith transmitted and the statement I have made on this part of the subject, and then decide if Major-General Chute was justified in reporting that he had been prevented by me from obeying his orders, to send troops to Australia.

19. Indeed I was so anxious that these troops should be removed from the Colony as speedily as possible that I objected to a proposal of Major-General Chute's to retain the 2nd Battalion 14th Regiment, in the Colony for about two months, for the purpose of drill and discipline. I suggested that they could be concentrated for this purpose in Australia, where the Home Government was to be relieved from the expense of the troops, and when I found the General unwilling to fall in with my views, I stated that if my recommendation on this head was not complied with, and if the troops were detained in the Colony, I should complain to Her Majesty's Government, as the Colonial Government was made to appear to delay the embarkation of troops it was most anxious to see removed from the country.

20. As a further proof of my earnest desire to get Her Majesty's Regular Forces out of the Colony as soon as possible, I would state that in my efforts to get this brought about, I have frequently, and especially for the last few months, been undergoing dangers, toils, or privations which have resembled those of a private soldier in Her Majesty's Service.

21. Mr. Weld's administration pressed constantly for the departure of the troops from the country. My present Advisers have been so embarrassed with the