

Ministers trust that in this Memorandum which it has been their painful duty to write in answer to Earl Granville's Despatch, they have not been betrayed by the strength of their natural feelings on a subject of vital importance to the Colony, into any expression offensive to the Imperial Government, or unbecoming their own position. Their sole endeavour has been to controvert, fairly and frankly, the erroneous (as they think) statements and imputations unreservedly conveyed in that Despatch, and to represent truly the case of New Zealand in relation to the Empire. They claim that the Colony should be practically recognized as an integral portion of that Empire, and not be thrust out beyond its pale as of infinitely less consideration than a British subject in foreign lands. They ask England for no pecuniary sacrifice; they do not appeal to her compassion; but they do appeal to those eternal principles of justice, which are as much the duty of the strong as they are the heritage of the weak, and which even the most powerful nation should never withhold from the feeblest suppliant.

W. GISBORNE,
Colonial Secretary.

For His Excellency the Governor.

NOTE.—The absence from Wellington of Mr. Fox has precluded him from signing this Memorandum.

No. 38.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G., to the
Right Hon. Earl GRANVILLE, K.G.

(No. 12.) Government House, Auckland,
MY LORD,— New Zealand, 29th January, 1870.

Vide *N.Z. Gazette*
No. 2, of 12th
January, 1870.

With reference to your Lordship's Despatch No. 102, of the 2nd October ultimo, I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of the notification inserted in the *New Zealand Government Gazette*, publishing Her Majesty's gracious ratification of the regulations issued by my Responsible Advisers the Ministers of this Colony, for the establishment of a "decorative distinction" for the Colonial Forces.

2. With regard to the comments made in the Despatch now under acknowledgment, I beg permission to repeat the explanation already submitted in my Despatch No. 78, of the 2nd July ultimo, reporting the action taken in this matter by the Government of New Zealand, viz.:—"It is of course known here that the Queen is the 'Fountain of Honor,' and alone can institute orders of merit, or other distinctions of Imperial value. But the Colonial Government does not pretend to any power of this kind; the proposed decorative distinction is simply a local honor, instituted and awarded, as it has been truly said, on a principle analogous to that on which (for example) the Royal Geographical Society, or the Humane Society grant their medals. *Personally, I would have preferred that this question should have been referred home in the first instance;* but my Responsible Advisers represented that Colonel Whitmore urged strongly, on public grounds, that there should be no delay; that the enclosed Order of the Executive Council should be passed forthwith, for the immediate reward, on the spot, of the Europeans and Natives who had most distinguished themselves in his campaigns on the East and West Coasts, which had terminated respectively in the capture of the main strongholds of the rebel leaders, Te Kooti and Titokowaru, at Ngatapa and Nukumaru. Among other observations to the same purport, Colonel Whitmore wrote:—"Distinctions of this kind, to be prized, should be conferred at once, and the decoration will do more good than anything else to stimulate our men; and to have that result it is desirable that the institution should be made to take effect as soon as possible, and before any portion of the force is broken up."

3. I need scarcely add, that in yielding, under the very pressing circumstances of the case, to the strong recommendations of my Responsible Advisers and of Colonel Whitmore, then in the field at the head of the Colonial Forces, nothing could be further from my intention than to outstep the limits of my authority. The Ministers urged that the small silver ornament which they wished to confer on the Volunteers and Militia (both Europeans and Natives) for good conduct on active service was not designed to be of any greater significance than the medals and other "decorative distinctions," which the Executive Councils of this and of other Colonies have for many years past given to the same corps as prizes for skill in the use of the rifle. I annex the most recent regulations on this latter subject, issued by the Minister for Defence.

Vide *N.Z. Gazette*
No. 27, of 30th
December, 1869.