

No. 25.

(No. 1.)

MY LORD,—

Dunedin, 22nd January, 1892.

In compliance with the request of the Hon. John Ballance, the Premier, I have the honour to transmit a memorandum addressed by the Hon. the Defence Minister to the Hon. the Premier requesting your Lordship to move His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commander in Chief to authorise the granting of a clasp to the New Zealand war medal for those who took part in the action fought at Waireka in 1860.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Lord Knutsford, &c.

ONSLOW.

Enclosure.

MEMORANDUM FOR HIS EXCELLENCY.

THE Premier begs respectfully to submit the attached letter from the Hon. the Defence Minister, recommending that Her Majesty the Queen may be pleased to authorise the granting of a clasp to the New Zealand war medal for the action fought at Waireka in 1860, with the request that His Excellency will be good enough to transmit it to the Secretary of State.

Premier's Office, Wellington, 31st December, 1891.

J. BALLANCE.

Sub-enclosure.

SIR,—

Defence Office, Wellington, New Zealand, 31st December, 1891.

I have the honour to request that you will place yourself in communication with the proper authorities with a view to His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commander-in-Chief being moved to grant a clasp to the New Zealand war medal for the action of Waireka, fought on the 28th March, 1860. The matter was brought before the House of Representatives on the 11th August last, proceedings of which are attached.

The battle of Waireka was the first occasion in which the colonial troops—*i.e.*, soldier-settlers and Volunteers—took their share of the brunt of the battle in company with Her Majesty's Imperial forces.

After a consultation with His Excellency the Governor (Colonel Gore Browne), a force of about fifty Taranaki Militia and a hundred Taranaki Volunteers, supported by a detachment of Her Majesty's 65th Regiment under Colonel Murray, and some blue-jackets and marines, of Her Majesty's ship "Niger," under Lieutenant Blake, R.N., attacked the Native pa on the Waireka Hill. The weight of the action during its earlier stages was mainly borne by the Militia and Volunteers, who were hard pressed, until Captain Cracroft, of the "Niger," having landed a fresh party, made a determined onslaught on the stronghold, carrying all before him.

Special importance is attached to the action at Waireka by the Taranaki settlers, owing to its being the first in which they took a leading part, the near proximity and strength of the Maoris' position—which was only about three miles and a half from New Plymouth—and most of all because of the very decided victory gained over an enemy whose numbers and boldness was becoming a serious menace to the very existence of the settlement.

The Provincial Council of Nelson, on the 4th April, 1860, passed a resolution expressing "admiration at the very gallant conduct of the Taranaki Volunteers and Militiamen, and of Captain Cracroft and the officers and seamen of Her Majesty's ship 'Niger,' at the recent battle of Waireka—conduct which not only reflects credit upon them, but has placed all colonists of New Zealand under a lasting obligation." The Provincial Councils of Napier, Wellington, Auckland, Canterbury, and Otago passed similar resolutions, in which, besides expressing congratulations on the manly, self-reliant spirit shown, and admiration for their gallant conduct, voted very liberal sums of money from provincial exchequers for the relief of those settlers who had suffered loss in friends and estates.

I venture to submit a design for the clasp, and beg to recommend the case for the favourable consideration of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge.

I have, &c.,

W. P. REEVES,

(For the Minister of Defence.)

The Hon. the Premier.

No. 26.

(No. 2.)

MY LORD,—

Wellington, 15th February, 1892.

In compliance with the request of the Hon. the Premier, I have the honour to inform you that the sections of the Constitution Act referred to in your Lordship's despatch (General) of the 20th November last have ceased to have any effect, and my Ministers see no reason why they should not be specifically repealed, subject to the usual saving clause. I also transmit herewith for your Lordship's information a compilation of Acts relating to the Constitution and Government of New Zealand, which has just been reissued, and which takes notice of the present position of these sections.

A.—2, 1892.
No. 32.

I have, &c.,

ONSLOW.

The Right Hon. Lord Knutsford, &c.