

In reply, I beg to say that no such language or expressions were made use of in my presence, as I should have deemed it my duty immediately to put a stop to it.

As I cannot hold myself responsible for what appears in a newspaper regarding the minutes of a meeting at which there was no newspaper reporter, I deem it my duty to enclose, for your information, a copy of the resolution that was passed at the meeting referred to.

I think I also have a right to inform you that the cause of the enclosed resolution being passed, was a remark made by Major Gordon, at the inspection, to the effect that "he came prepared to make an unfavourable report of the Napier Artillery Volunteers."

The above, I trust, will be sufficient for the information of the Defence Minister.

Major Withers,
Commanding District, Napier.

I have, &c.,
W. ROUTLEDGE,
Captain N.A.V.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 1 in No. 4.

Copy of one of the RESOLUTIONS of a MEETING of the NAPIER ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS held at "The Foresters' Arms," April 13th, 1874.

Proposed by Sergeant-Major Grey, and seconded by Gunner King, "That this meeting consider the conduct of Major Gordon to the Napier Artillery Volunteers unwarrantable."

SUB-LIEUT. BROOKING,
Hon. Sec.

Enclosure 2 in No. 4.

The UNDER SECRETARY for DEFENCE, Wellington, to MAJOR GORDON, Napier.
Native and Defence Office (Militia and Volunteer Branch),
Wellington, 8th May, 1874.

SIR,—

I am instructed by the Hon. Dr. Pollen (acting for the Hon. the Native Minister) to transmit herewith, for your information, copies of correspondence relating to remarks alleged to have been made at a meeting of the Napier Artillery Volunteers.

I have, &c.,
W. MOULE, Lieut.-Colonel,
Acting Under Secretary for Defence.

Major Gordon, Inspector of Volunteers, Napier.

No. 5.

RECOMMENDATION from MAJOR GORDON, Inspector of Volunteers, relative to the Disbandment of the Napier Artillery.

SIR,—

Auckland, 13th July, 1874.

With reference to your letter No. 166, of the 8th of May last, covering certain communications from Major Withers, commanding at Napier, and Captain Routledge, of the Napier Artillery Volunteer Company, I have to report that the language—or rather words pretty similar in import, but not quite—attributed to me by the Napier Artillery Volunteers were used by me; but I am glad to be able to show the Defence Minister how far-fetched and how malevolent is the ingenuity brought into exercise by this company, to enable it to concoct the statement in question, and which it seems to wish it to be understood as the only language I addressed to the corps when I saw it on the 27th March last.

My better plan is to record precisely the language I did use, and underscore the words which the corps extracted from my address, so as to construct the observation which it took under its consideration with the approval of its commanding officer, and upon which it was pleased to record its opinion as follows:—"That this meeting considers the conduct of Major Gordon to the Napier Artillery Volunteers unwarrantable."

My address to the company was as follows:—"Artillery Volunteers of Napier: On arriving on the parade ground (where the presentation of prizes to colonial prize-firing representatives took place), I observed that you were being told off and prowd by an obsolete rule, abandoned many years ago: then, when the general parade was formed, I placed you as an Artillery Company on the right, as the post of honor, and in front, to lead the column in marching past, but found you so deficient in the simplest rudiments of drill, that you contributed very much to mar the effect I intended the general parade to present, and that, therefore, *in coming to see you on your private parade, at squad and company drill, I felt that my report on your state would, unfortunately, be any but a favourable one—such an one as the Government would scarcely be prepared to receive of the Napier Artillery*; but that, having discovered that the chief cause of your great deficiency in any knowledge of the drill required by the Volunteer Regulations, is owing to the incapacity of the instructor provided for you by the Government, I will not take advantage of your present condition to make any report to the Government now, but will revisit Napier in the course of six weeks or two months, and that, upon inspection then, my report will be based; in the meantime I will take steps to cause you to be provided with a competent drill-sergeant."

In corroboration of my statement, I beg to annex the evidence of Major Withers, Major Roberts, and Captain Marshall. I will here remark that, when Major Withers addressed you on the 27th of April, he should, when he had the opportunity, have informed you of all that occurred on the parade in question, instead of withdrawing, until called for by me, information which he must have known would have given to my proceedings an aspect of quite a different character to that which he and the Artillery Company perhaps intended it to present.

As this assembling of companies to pass resolutions condemnatory of their superior officer is so subversive of all discipline, I hope that the Napier Artillery Company will be summarily disbanded, as was the First Hauraki Company for a similar offence.