

(No. 8.)



1867.

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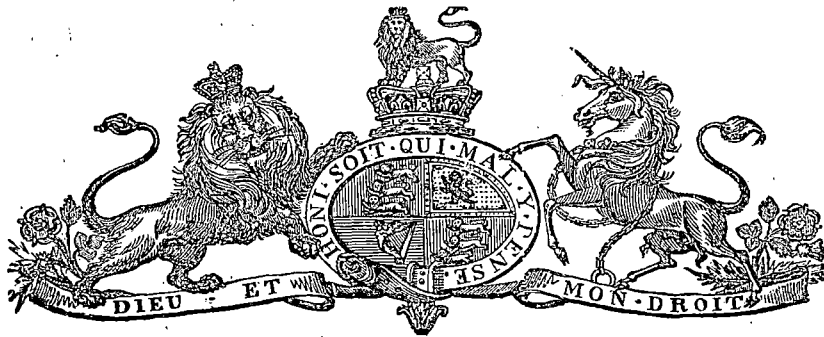
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DEFENCES OF THE COLONY.

DESPATCHES, AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES.

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Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, 20 August, 1867.



No. 7.  
MILITARY.

*Government House, 7th February, 1867.*

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honor to forward two Notes which I thought it my duty to record in the Minutes of the Executive Council of this Colony, I regret to say, without any result.

2. In my Despatch No. 113, of 17th November, 1863, I submitted a Resolution of the House of Assembly, and in No. 73, 20th September, 1865, I submitted a proposal from my Responsible Advisers, both offering a subsidy and promising their cordial co-operation for the Defences of the Colony; and when these requests were refused, I forwarded a letter on the subject from my Responsible Advisers on 23rd May, 1866.

3. In the early part of 1866 Commodore Sir W. Wiseman visited Tasmania in the *Curaçoa*; and he and Brigadier-General Carey, having been asked to advise the Local Government as to how Hobart Town could be defended from attacks by roving ships, concurred in recommending the erection of two Revolving Turrets each armed with two powerful guns, and they pointed out the most eligible positions for them.

4. The late Ministry adopted these recommendations, and were prepared to submit them to the Local Parliament, and ask for £20,000 the estimated cost: they, however, left office before they had an opportunity of bringing the subject before the Legislature. When a new Ministry accepted office the Local Parliament was adjourned to give them time to prepare their Estimates. I lost no time in bringing the subject of the Defences to their notice, and as soon as Parliament met for business I called their attention to the subject again by the Memo. which I now forward.

5. I regret, however, to say that the vote for Volunteers has been reduced from £3000 in 1865 and £2000 in 1866 to £1500 in 1867, and that Ministers have not submitted any measure to the Local Parliament with a view of providing for the defence of the Colony.

6. The only Defences of the Harbour at present are two batteries armed with guns, which could do but little damage to a ship at a distance from whence the Town could be shelled. The Garrison consists of three Companies of Her Majesty's 14th Regiment who are little used to battery practice, and Volunteers (on paper) of whom ninety-one are Artillerymen. Some heavy guns have been ordered and are expected from England, but without the batteries for which they were intended they will be of but little use.

7. I have felt it my duty to trouble Your Lordship with these details, because, in the event of a sudden rupture with a Naval power, Hobart Town and harbour might be captured and used as a base of attack on the other Colonies before it would be possible to adopt measures for defence.

8. It is right also that I should say, that part of the disinclination to erect Revolving Towers, which could give reasonable security to the Town at the moderate cost of £20,000, is the belief that it is not safe to entrust the batteries to Volunteers alone. The question of granting one Company of Artillery instead of three Companies of Troops of the Line has been, however, fully submitted in the Despatches to which I have referred.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) T. GORE BROWNE.

*To the Right Honorable the EARL OF CARNARVON.*

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Copy of Executive Council Minute which Ministers desired to be sent to the Colonial Secretary's Office for their consideration.

By Order of the Governor,

E. C. NOWELL.

4 December, 1866.

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1866.

MINUTE No. 293.

The following Minute of His Excellency is laid before the Council, and having been read, a copy is ordered to be forwarded to the Colonial Secretary for the consideration of Ministers:—

“The Governor thinks it his duty to call the attention of his Responsible Advisers to the defenceless condition of the Colony, and to refer them to the Reports of Commodore Sir W. Wiseman and Brigadier-General Carey, C.B. These Reports were approved by the late Ministers, and are now in the Colonial Secretary's Office. The Governor has only to add, that he entirely concurs in opinion with these distinguished Officers. In the same Office will be found Correspondence showing what measures the late Ministers adopted with a view to arm and man the existing and proposed batteries.

“The Governor trusts the subject will meet with early consideration, as it is one of vital importance to the safety of the Colony.”

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1867.

PRESENT:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.  
THE HONORABLE SIR RICHARD DRY, KNT.  
THE HONORABLE T. D. CHAPMAN, ESQ.  
THE HONORABLE W. L. DOBSON, ESQ.

MINUTE No. 35.

The Governor, by the following Minute, again draws the attention of Ministers to the subject of the Defences of the Colony:—

“As the Session of Parliament is drawing to a close, the Governor feels it his duty again to call the attention of Ministers to the defenceless state of the Colony, and to his Minute recorded in Council on the 3rd December, 1866.”

True Extract from the Minutes of the Executive Council,

E. C. NOWELL, *Clerk of the Council.*

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TASMANIA.

No. 8.

*Downing-street, 29th April, 1867.*

SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch No. 7, of the 7th February, on the subject of the Defences of Hobart Town. I have learnt with regret that the vote for Volunteers has been reduced from £3000 in 1865 to £1500 in 1867, and that your Ministers have not submitted any measure to the Local Parliament with a view of providing for the more efficient defence of the Colony from Foreign attack.

I request that you will point out to your Ministry the inutility of the expense which has already been incurred for heavy Guns and Volunteers, when no provision is made for giving proper protection to the Guns and to the men who may be employed in working them.

The absence of any such protective works would in all probability, in case of Foreign attack, prevent Her Majesty's Troops stationed in the Colony from being of any service in defending the Port and Town; and it will be a matter of serious consideration for Her Majesty's Government whether any of Her Majesty's Troops should be permitted to be placed in situations where due provision is not made for enabling them to resist the attacks of an enemy.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

BUCKINGHAM & CHANDOS.

Governor GORE BROWNE, C.B.