

1883.

NEW ZEALAND.

PETITION OF RICHARD JOHN DEIGHTON.

Presented to the House of Representatives, 7th August, 1883, and ordered to be printed.

To the Honourable the Members of the House of Representatives of New Zealand
in Parliament assembled.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN WELLINGTON,

SHOWETH,—

1. That your petitioner is one of the only few now left of the early pioneer founders of the colony who landed in New Zealand on the 22nd January, 1840; that he has therefore served the process of colonization in numerous ways for over forty-three years.

2. That your petitioner, on one notable occasion, voluntarily (without remuneration) rendered a service which, if it did not save the colony from being abandoned altogether by the settlers, most certainly was the means of saving the lives of many of his brother-colonists, together with an incalculable amount of property. Your petitioner alludes to the very critical time when Te Rangihaeata, of Wairau massacre celebrity, with his myrmidons, was killing the settlers and destroying their homesteads at the Taita (Hutt) in 1846. Your petitioner at the time was residing at Wanganui when a large war party, raised through the machinations of the very subtle but influential old chief Te Rauperaha, was on the point of starting to join the above-mentioned chief at the Taita. Your petitioner undertook to carry a despatch from the Resident Magistrate and deliver it into the hands of the then Governor (now Sir George Grey) in time for him to take steps so as to prevent their coalescence. This important service your petitioner, at the imminent risk of his own life, satisfactorily performed. By starting with the war party, and, eluding them on the way, he successfully delivered the despatch, allowing His Excellency time to make the necessary arrangements for preventing their joining the other insurgents at the Taita. Your petitioner also at the same time gave such information that revealed the treachery of Te Rauperaha, and which led to that chief's capture, in which transaction your petitioner took a prominent part by giving the charge of treason and personally assisting in taking the prisoner. To the truth of the above statement your petitioner feels assured that Sir George Grey (now in Wellington) can and will cheerfully testify.

3. That your petitioner has been since then (as an unpaid Volunteer) in several engagements with the insurgent Natives, and has always been forward in every case where his services could be of any avail.

4. That your petitioner is now and has been for the last thirteen years a helpless, paralytic cripple, incapable of personal action; the only bread-winner being his poor wife, who has to walk daily, wet or dry, the distance of over a mile to attend a small school she keeps, she at the same time suffering martyrdom from rheumatism, the proceeds from her occupation in the aggregate never exceeding ten shillings a week.

5. That the house of your petitioner is in such a dreadful state of irrepair that the rain comes in at every quarter, and it will take, according to a contractor's estimate, at least from £45 to £50 to put it into a habitable state of repair.

6. That your petitioner prays that his case may be favourably entertained, and that, for his services in past times, and in consideration of his present helpless condition, he may be allowed a small pension, sufficient to save him in his old age (he is now sixty-four) from utter destitution. He would also feel grateful for a small pecuniary grant to enable him to get his dwelling put into a habitable state of repair.

And your petitioner will ever pray, &c.

Te Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, 1st August, 1883.

RICHARD JOHN DEIGHTON.

