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Admiralty, August 1, 1860.

DESPATCHES, of which the following are copies, have been received by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty from Commodore William Loring, C.B., Senior Officer of Her Majesty's Ships and Vessels on the Australian Station :

No. 19. *Her Majesty's ship Iris, Auckland,*
SIR, *April 27, 1860.*

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, copies of reports which I have received from Captain Cracroft, of Her Majesty's ship Niger, relative to the proceedings of a part of her crew employed on shore at Taranaki, at the requisition of His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand.

The capture of the pah, as described in his letter No. 10, was, on the part of Captain Cracroft, his officers, and men, a most dashing and judiciously timed affair.

His Excellency Colonel Gore Browne informs me that it was most opportune. The death of several of the most troublesome of the Taranaki Chiefs, and of a considerable number of their followers, served not only to damp the ardour of the rebellious tribes, but also to avenge some cold blooded murders which these very people had committed only a few days previously.

And it is now known that, under God's providence, this success was also the means of saving the lives of a detachment of the Colonial Volunteers whom the Maories had beleaguered in a neighbouring house, and whose ammunition was almost expended.

Captain Cracroft has not mentioned his own personal share in the affair, but I learn that his coolness on that and on other occasions was most conspicuous, and that he did not undertake this

very hazardous service in a spirit of headstrong gallantry, but from a deliberate conviction that it was necessary that the attempt should be made, and therefore it was done, and done most successfully.

Under these circumstances I trust that their Lordships will authorise me, in accordance with the request of Captain Cracroft, in his letter No. 11, to decorate William Odgers, leading seaman, with the Victoria Cross. These Maori natives are by no means a contemptible foe,—man to man they are equal to ourselves ; and in the storming of the pah it could only have been by eager and determined gallantry that success could have been attained.

I also beg to call their Lordships' attention to his letter No. 12, enclosing a letter from the Colonel in command of the troops in another part of the field, and also a letter from Colonel Gold, Commanding-in-Chief.

Lieutenant W. H. Blake's conduct, as Senior Lieutenant of Her Majesty's ship Niger, has been uniformly correct and efficient, and whilst on shore, in command of fifty-five seamen, he has shown himself a gallant leader.

I much regret to state that his wound is of a serious nature ; and I beg very respectfully and strongly to recommend him to the notice of their Lordships as an officer whose conduct has rendered him worthy of promotion.

I have, &c.,
WILLIAM LORING, Commodore.

To the Secretary of the Admiralty.

No. 10. *Her Majesty's ship Niger, Taranaki,*
SIR, *New Zealand, March 31, 1860.*

AT 1 P.M., on the 28th instant, I received the enclosed requisition from Colonel Gold ; you are