

supporters at Taupo, went mad in February last; at a meeting at Ngaruawahia, in May, only one member of the Runanga knew of this fact, the rest appeared to hear it then for the first time. The proceedings at a meeting of the rebellious Ngatiwhauroa, held at Kahumatuku, almost within sight of the King's palace, on April 7th, were first known at Ngaruawahia by a *Maori Messenger* published on May 1st, which reached the Maori capital on May 23rd. Letters are a most uncertain way of sending intelligence; any person can write a letter full of all sorts of inventions, and sign some great man's name at the bottom. Letters are also often opened and stopped. A letter from Renata and other chiefs of Hawke's Bay to Thompson, expostulating with him for not agreeing to have the Waitara dispute settled by law, never (to the best of my belief) got further than Kihikihi, where it was discussed in open runanga: at least Thompson told me a fortnight afterwards at Tamahere that he had never received it. On the other hand, they have very early military intelligence. They have been well aware of the progress of the road at Mangatawhiri, and have known much more than I of the affair of the road from Whaingaroa to Waipa. Hapurona's outburst at Taranaki was told here as soon as in Auckland. William King informed Mr. Clarke that they have a messenger at Taranaki to watch the progress of the road there, and that he will instantly bring them news if it comes on Native land.

(3.) *The King's Officers.*

There are men in every tribe who call themselves Officers of the King, but it is merely a title which means that they are not Officers of the Queen. Their power, dignity, and emolument, are all derived from local sources; they have no interests which make them uphold the government of the King as distinguished from the tribal government; they are nothing but local authorities who use the King's name as a badge of their opposition to the English Government. At Tamahere, when I brought forward the entire want of protection to the property of Europeans throughout the King's dominions, William Thompson and Toma proposed that the King should appoint magistrates in every tribe, whose duty it should be to suppress all wrongs done by Maoris to Europeans. I am not sure whether this project has entirely fallen to the ground, but it is evident it never can be carried into effect. The local runangas would give no help to the King's magistrate, until they had examined and satisfied themselves of the justice of his decision; so that they would still be the real judges, and in any collision with them the King's magistrate would have to go to the wall. When face to face with the people he would be as helpless as I am. Besides, the King could give no salary, and could hold out no inducement which would make his magistrate prefer a barren allegiance to him, to falling in with the passions and prejudices of his own kindred and the companions of his every-day life.

There are several large bodies of young men in Waikato and the neighbourhood, who are formed into companies, drilled, armed, and dressed in uniform, in imitation of our regular troops. They call themselves King's soldiers. Soldiering is the latest and most absorbing fashion amongst the Waikatos. It was begun on the return of the fighting men from Taranaki, and has been since steadily on the increase. At first the old men looked coldly upon the movement; some observed, I have been told, that the young men would be spoiled for fighting, and would be only fit to "keep barracks;" especially after it was William Thompson. It had been agreed that each tribe in its turn should furnish a company as a guard of honour to the King; when it came to the turn of Ngatihaua, Thompson would not have anything to do with the plan; he said the Ngatihaua were all ploughmen, they had no soldiers; and he ended by taking his men to Ngaruawahia and ploughing up about seventy acres of land for potatoes. But notwithstanding all the opposition, the institution has made its way. The last time I saw Thompson, he said his objection was withdrawn and he had even serious thoughts of being drilled himself; but I have not yet heard of Ngatihaua being actually embodied. Most of the soldiers are young men of about twenty; they are very neatly dressed, usually in white trousers, blue coats, and white caps with a red cross embroidered in front. I have seen some with very stiff military stocks. Their arms are nothing better than old Brummagem muskets; a few have fowling pieces and rifles taken at Taranaki. I am no judge of drilling, but to my unprofessional eye they perform remarkably well; the various movements are executed by each individual of a large body at precisely the same instant. When we have been staying anywhere with the soldiers, the drill has appeared to be incessant; but I have ridden unexpectedly into Ngaruawahia, and found the sentry boxes empty, or the sentinel sprawling in a most unprofessional attitude, and all his comrades away at play; still this may have been accidental. The discipline is strict, the soldiers silent and well-behaved on parade; they are regularly marched into church to morning and evening prayers, and I have even seen some of them get their ears boxed for misbehaviour, though misconduct in church is very rare. The soldiers grow their own food, and are said to be paid at the rate of 3d. a day. I can give no trustworthy account of the number of these men. There is a body of them at Ngaruawahia, one at Kihikihi, Taati's regiment at Rangiaowhia, Patene's at Moaunui, and Reihana's at Whataroa said to be 80 strong. Hemara, the colonel of Reihana's regiment, gave me accounts of many others at Mokau, Kawhia, and the Upper Waipa; but I have no personal knowledge of any of these. The sources from which their pay is derived are various; Taati and Reihana both receive money from the Government for finding carriers for the inland mails; Taati's soldiers have the monopoly of the mail from Otawhao to Mere-mere, and Reihana's men are paid from the fees and fines inflicted in his Court; so that they have a very strong and obvious interest in the vigorous administration of justice.

These soldiers are not at the command of the King; whether they would always obey their commanding officer or not, I cannot say; but it is certain that their commanding officers are not subject to the Runanga at Ngaruawahia. The King sent to ask Reihana to send his soldiers to Coromandel to take care of the gold; he replied that his soldiers were to take care of the King