

to; while I fully admitted the truth of the statement that the Ngatirangiwehi had been the cause and were the active promoters of the disaffection against the Government, I was not quite satisfied that they had, in the present hostilities, committed any overt act sufficiently serious to justify such a step. Yet, at the same time, feeling confident that so long as the Puhirua party are allowed to exist as at present there would be no permanent peace for Rotorua: with the conflicting statements above alluded to before me I deemed it advisable to endeavour to ascertain for myself the true state of things. I therefore wrote to Te Katene and Ereata, the two principal men of the Ngatirangiwehi. I laid before them the unenviable position in which they stood with the majority of their tribe and the Government, as the source of all the troubles which havelately beset Rotorua. I also begged them to reflect upon the deplorable loss of human life that had been occasioned by their determined antagonism to the Government of the country. I entreated them to come in, "to mend the breach in the Arawa cause they had caused;" and that, if they would do so, no notice would be taken of past disaffection. To this communication I requested a written reply, as I would not receive any verbal answer. This letter I sent by Hoani Ngamu, one of our Assessors, a near relative of Katene, who, with another Native also named Hoani, volunteered to convey it to the Ngatirangiwehi, and bring back the reply. A week nearly elapsed before Hoani Ngamu returned. He reported that, notwithstanding the assurance given to Wiremu Maihi, of remaining at Puhirua, the Ngatirangiwehi, with all their women and children, had retired to the forest. That the Natives who were met with on the skirts of the forest would not reveal the whereabouts of Katene. Under these circumstances Hoani Takurua (Ngamu) entrusted my letter to an old man, not daring to proceed any further himself. After two days' absence the old man returned, stating that he could not find Katene; that he had met some Waikato Hauhaus, who took forcible possession of my letter, and sent him back with a threat that if he appeared again in that direction with any such communications that he should forfeit his life. Hoani, who related all this to me, affected to place full credence in the old man's story. The old man met Ereata, who returned with him to Puhirua to see Hoani Takurua. Hoani left Ereata writing a letter to me which would be brought by his companion. I had many chiefs about me who at once set down the old man's story as a pure invention; they unhesitatingly gave it as their opinion that Te Katene and Ereata had received my letter, but were only temporising and deceiving me. Hoani's companion arrived about four days afterwards, and was not aware of the statement that had been made to me. I asked him what had passed between himself and Ereata, and between Ereata and Hoani. This man's statement differed in many important points from that of Hoani: he stated it as his opinion that my letter had reached Katene, and that Ereata was aware of the fact. Ereata's great anxiety seemed to be to obtain information as to our numbers and intentions. Ereata's letter, of which he was the bearer, was anything but satisfactory; he said as little as it was possible for him to say, and gave as his excuse that he had not seen my letter. I began to think that the opinion of the Ohinemutu chiefs was correct.

Unsatisfactory as was the result of my first attempt, I determined to try once more. I wrote another letter almost in the same terms as before, and requested a personal interview. This letter was also entrusted to Hoani, with a request that the reply might be in writing. Hoani was fortunate enough to meet with Ereata, into whose hands he delivered my letter. Ereata, after reading it said, "this letter contains matter for consideration. It contains a request that we should give up our King, and our Hauhaus faith. I cannot now send a reply, but must first consult Te Katene." He said the reply should be sent immediately. I have no doubt that an attempt was being made to deceive me. Just at this time I received information that the Hauhaus were again collecting in force in Tauranga, and that the troops were being removed. This news soon spread through the pa, and in the evening the chiefs Petera Te Pukuatua, Wiremu Maihi Te Pokiha, Taiapo, Paora Te Amahau, and several others, came to my quarters. From their serious demeanour I was satisfied that there was some cause for this visit. Wiremu Maihi, who on all such occasions constitutes himself the principal speaker, at once opened the cause of trouble, by saying, "What does all this mean. Is it true that the troops are being removed from Tauranga?"

I answered in the affirmative. "What does it mean; are the Government going to betray us; have we not come forward and assisted you in your time of need, and by so doing have we not made ourselves obnoxious to all the surrounding tribes, and now that we are being threatened on every side is this a time to remove the soldiers," and much more in the same strain. I assured them that the Government were quite sensible of the valuable services rendered by the Arawas, and that it was not at all likely they would now be abandoned to the vengeance of their enemies. That the troops were being removed by order of the Queen, and that they must go. The deputation was not altogether satisfied, and I was given to understand that it would be made the subject of appeal to the Government.

Two days after this transpired fresh intelligence was brought from Tauranga to the effect that a strong force of Hauhaus was in the neighbourhood of Te Papa, and that during the confusion created by the removal of the Imperial Troops, and the culpable conduct of many of the Militia, it was their intention to make an attack by night. I received three letters from Enoke Te Wanake, a chief in whom I place some reliance, begging me not to treat the information with indifference, not even if the threat was not carried out at once, as he fully believed an attempt upon Te Papa would be made. I was also given to understand that Bishop Williams, who happened to be on the spot, gave it as his opinion that the warning should not be disregarded.

Under the circumstances I saw no other course than to divide the Arawa forces, to take about 170 men to Tauranga, and to leave about 100 men to watch the Hauhaus in the Rotorua District, and to repel any sudden attack that might be made by the Waikatos, as it was currently reported that the Waikatos were making preparations to come in large numbers to revenge their losses, which are said to have been severe, especially in the last affair.

On the evening of the same day I had another gathering of chiefs, on this occasion they came to express their opinion as to the best plan of ridding the country of this constant state of uncertainty. Why, said they, "does the Government act thus; why do we lop at the branches instead of digging up the root. Here we are cutting off the branches. There is the root at Waikato untouched. The King