

chiefs, all killed at Omarunui, kept the rest in the dark as to their intended movements ; though it is pretty certain that two chiefs—Henare Paata, brother of Kipa, Kingita, and Rangihiroa, now gone to the Chatham Islands, and Nihora te Whakaunua, still in the gaol hospital here, were privy to all that went on, and I have extracted from these men and others, by cross-examination, confirmation of the following facts :—

1. The intention was to take the Town of Napier by a bold and sudden night attack from the Petane side, to be carried out by the party under Te Rangihiroa, Paira Toki, and Anaru Matete, who were routed by Major Fraser on the 12th instant.

2. The Omarunui party were then either to gain over or annihilate the friendly tribes, and then devastate the homesteads in the neighbouring country.

3. Ngairo and Wi Hapi were to march on Porangahau and demolish the Queen Maories and settlers in the southern end of the Province.

4. The Urewera were to undertake the re-conquest of the Wairoa and Poverty Bay.

5. Waikato and Taupo were to come down afterwards, recruit their commissariat and their supplies of ammunition, and the next point of attack was to be decided upon.

To carry out these plans they were to be made invincible and invulnerable by their *atua*, and so firmly did they believe this that they actually thought that twelve men would be sufficient to take Napier. At least so I am told by some of the prisoners, though I had previously understood that the Hau Hau term “*tekau ma rua*,” did not literally mean twelve, but was merely a name for the party who were told off for the attack and might include sixty or seventy, and this seems more probable. Be that as it may, their notions have been pretty effectually dispelled at Omarunui and Petane.

With regard to the project of marching upon Porangahau, from Wairarapa, I beg to state that being at the former Settlement on the 13th (the day after Omarunui and before they had received the news) I was told by the leading chiefs there, that they were in hourly expectation of the invasion. Since then rumours have been flying through the Province, sometimes to the effect that the Wairarapa detachment had actually arrived, sometimes that they were at this or that station on the road. Of course these have, as yet, turned out false—indeed, we were made aware on the 24th instant (when the rumours were at their highest) that the expected party had been in communication with the Hon. the Colonial Defence Minister, through a flag of truce, at Moiki, in Wairarapa, on the 22nd. Still there remains the fact that the Porangahau Natives are, and have been expecting them daily for a fortnight, upon what they consider reliable authority. And the only question now is whether they are, under present circumstances, likely to come or not.

One of two reasons may operate to stop them—either they may be prevented from leaving Wairarapa, as the Ngatihineuru were prevented from leaving Heretaunga, or supposing them to be still free agents, they may be deterred from their invasion of Hawke’s Bay by hearing of the reception accorded to Ngatihineuru.

The latter hypothesis is possible but doubtful, I almost think unlikely, for their fanaticism is so great that they are sure to find some excuse for their defeat, either that Panapa misinterpreted the *atua*’s will, that Kipa disobeyed the king’s orders, that the people disobeyed one or both of these leaders, some such excuse will be found to hoodwink their deluded followers.

I think, therefore, upon a careful review of the whole subject, that if Ngairo and Hapi and their party get a fair start from Wairarapa, they will be heard of either at Porangahau or Ruataniwha, according to which road they may take. In this view I am supported by the Maori Chiefs and by the Rev. Samuel Williams and other gentlemen in the Province best acquainted with Maori customs and habits of thought.

The fate of the parties encountered at Omarunui and Petane, was as follows :—

Killed—Omarunui, 12th	...	...	...	...	21
Petane	...	...	...	...	12
Glengarry, a farm near Petane, on 13th	...	...	...	...	3
Died from wounds	...	...	...	...	1
Total killed	...	...	...	...	37
Prisoners, including wounded	...	...	...	...	77
Total killed and taken	...	...	...	...	114
Escaped—Omarunui	...	...	...	4	
Petane	...	...	...	10	
					14
Total	...	...	...	...	128

The chiefs killed were Te Rangihiroa, principal chief of the Ngatihineuru, a savage of the old school, an inveterate enemy of the Pakeha, and the chief who introduced Hau Hauism under a false pretext into Wairarapa last year ; Kipa and Kingita, his half-brothers, both troublesome men of notoriously bad character ; and Panapa, the high priest or prophet, a man of low extraction, but clever and unscrupulous. Among the prisoners are Henare Poata, brother to Kipa and Kingita, and Nikora te Wakaunua, both men hitherto of good character, and generally known as being very friendly and hospitable to travellers. Both had been employed as gangers on the road when the track to Taupo was being improved by the Provincial Government.

The notorious Paora Toki and Anaru Matete (whose names must be already well known at the Native Office), escaped unhurt from the party attacked by Major Fraser, and fled precipitately to carry the news of their discomfiture to Taupo. It appears at first sight a pity that two such ruffians should have got off, but perhaps it may have a good effect in deterring their colleagues of other tribes from prosecuting their schemes of invasion, and so be the means of avoiding further bloodshed.

I have, &c.,
G. S. COOPER.

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