

No. 57.

Captain WALKER to the Hon. the DEFENCE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Opotiki, 16th April, 1870.

In the absence of Lieut.-Colonel St. John at Whakatane, I have the honor to report that the Native scouts returned here last night, bringing with them one of the Whakatohea, whom they fell in with in the Waiaua Valley. Two other fugitives have come in this morning. These three men were among those whom Te Kooti took with him from Omarumutu, on the 6th March last, and accompanied a party consisting of ten Ngatiporou, whom Te Kooti sent to communicate with the Whakatohea, and sound them as to their inclinations towards the Government. These three men report that, after the fight at Waioveka, Te Kooti retired towards Waikare-Moana with forty men, in expectation of getting reinforced there, and that it was his intention to return to Maraetahi in May, to take away the Whakatohea. With this object, and feeling secure of the sympathy of the Whakatohea, the party of Ngatiporou alluded to was sent down by Te Kooti, in order to prepare the tribe for a second visit from him. The Whakatohea, however, profess their determination of securing Te Kooti, should he place himself in their power, and of handing him over to the Government; in this their sincerity is to be tested by their self-interest.

The people now living at Maraetahi consist of about 40 souls, the remnant of the Whakatohea, and they are reported as being ready to come in, provided they are assured of personal safety. Under these circumstances, I have advised that they be written to by their friends here, which no doubt will have the effect, together with Colonel St. John's letter, of inducing them to surrender. I have told the Whakatohea, in the event of their holding any intercourse with the emissaries of Te Kooti, to endeavour to induce them to lay down their arms, under a promise of being allowed to return to their people with the sanction of the Government. I have written to Major Ropata informing him of Te Kooti's whereabouts, sending the letter along the coast, which I expect will reach him at Aku Aku before he leaves.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. D. McLean, Defence Minister, Auckland.

G. P. WALKER, Capt.

No. 58.

Lieut.-Colonel ST. JOHN to the Hon. the DEFENCE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Opotiki, 19th April, 1870.

I have the honor to report that on my return from Whakatane, on the 16th instant, I received intelligence of the presence of refugees in the Waihana, as mentioned in Captain Walker's report.

I immediately set off for Omaramutu, and there learnt that these people were partly Mataura Ngatiporou, and Hare Topia's Whakatohea. Two of the Whakatoheas had gone out to meet them, and would be back next day.

I then rode on to Torere to sound William King as to his co-operation in the intended move up the Waioveka. He declined joining, alleging as a reason that it was very well for the Whakatohea, who had sins upon their shoulders, to work without pay; but that his people would not move without daily payments. His real reason is, I believe, that he still distrusts the Whakatoheas.

Next morning I returned to Omarumutu, and waited there till the two messengers came in. It seems these men had come upon the party, and found it to consist of eight Ngatiporous and two Whakatohea, Paora and Te Whare Kura, two influential chiefs, next in rank to Te Hera.

I opened a communication with them, knowing that for some time past Paora has been anxious to surrender, and sent to them by Tiwai a letter stating that if they helped us to apprehend Te Kooti, their past offences would be forgiven. At the same time I sent by their hands a letter to Hera Te Popo to the same effect, and the chiefs of the Whakatoheas wrote also to him.

Yesterday Tiwai returned. He had seen the two chiefs, who started off at once back to Hera. They expressed themselves very glad at the chance of coming in, and promised to use their best exertions with Te Hera. Should the latter not consent, they stated that to purchase their pardon, they would lead the Whakatohea friendlies on to Te Kooti's resting place, from which hint it is supposed that Te Kooti has not left for Waikare.

The intelligence of the movements after the defeat corroborates that previously given. I expect Hera's answer on Thursday.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. D. McLean.

J. H. H. ST. JOHN, Lt.-Col.

No. 59.

His Honor J. D. ORMOND to the Hon. the DEFENCE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Napier, 18th April, 1870.

I have the honor to acknowledge and thank you for your letters of the 31st March and 2nd April, enclosing for my information copies of reports by Major Ropata Wahawaha, Mr. Porter, and Lieut.-Colonel St. John, of operations conducted under Major Ropata's directions in the Urewera and Waioeka Districts.

By the arrival of the "Rangatira," I have received from Mr. Locke fuller details of these operations, as well as particulars of Ropata's intended movement into the Urewera country, to bring out, if possible, the remnant of the Ngatikohatu Tribe.

The great success that has attended Ropata's operations cannot but exercise a great influence for good; and I trust, if he be successful in his present movement, that the security of the East Coast may be looked upon as achieved.

I shall watch with great interest what he is able to do, and afford every assistance in my power. I am inclined to think that the Wairoa Natives are making a simultaneous movement with Ropata's