

was finally determined that the sentence of death should be carried into effect only in the person of Hamiora Te Peri, the most aggravated case in the opinion of the Judge who presided at the trials. This man was not a Chatham Island prisoner, nor a member of Te Kooti's tribe. It could not therefore be urged, in palliation of his crimes, that he was avenging his imprisonment, or that he was influenced by the feelings of clanship. He voluntarily joined Te Kooti soon after his landing, evidently from the mere love of blood and plunder, and was clearly proved to have taken an active part in the cruel murders of unarmed men, Europeans and Maoris, and of women and children, in the Poverty Bay massacre. These atrocities are as much abhorred by the Natives generally as by the Colonists, and the fate of Hamiora Te Peri excited no sympathy among his own countrymen. He was executed on the 16th instant, within the precincts of the gaol at Wellington, and exhibited craven fear on the scaffold. I am assured that this is the only known instance of any Maori having ever met death, under any circumstances whatsoever, except with stern indifference or with calm and decorous fortitude.

3. On the grounds fully explained in the enclosed Minute of Council, the capital sentences of three other members of Te Kooti's bands (Heteriki, Rewi, and Matene,) have been commuted to penal servitude for life, with the prospect of further remission in the event of good conduct. These men will be kept to hard labour in the gaol at Wellington.

4. The remaining convicts, seventy-three in number, being prisoners from the bands of Titokowaru on the West Coast, were not found to have been directly concerned in murders or other heinous atrocities; consequently, their sentences have been commuted, according to the measure of the guilt of each individual, to various terms of penal servitude,—in no instance exceeding seven years,—“on the understanding that there will be, after careful consideration of the special circumstances in each case, a further remission; and that if tranquillity is restored, with a reasonable prospect of permanence, and if these prisoners behave well, a mitigation of their sentences will be recommended.” Meanwhile, they have been sent from Wellington to Dunedin, in the South Island, in which there are only about fifteen hundred Maoris (men, women, and children), scattered over an area as great as that of Ireland, and where they are surrounded by a large European population. The latest report which I have seen states that from five to six thousand persons crowded the wharves of Dunedin to see the Hauhaus land from the steamer which had brought them from Wellington; and that “on the following morning, at a quarter past seven o'clock, thirty of the Maori prisoners were marched by a strong guard of warders to the Botanical Gardens to break stones. At the same hour thirty were marched to the High School to form a recreation ground for the scholars. Their work was pronounced very satisfactory by the overseers, Mr. Outram, at the High School, and Mr. Ferguson, at the Gardens. The remaining thirteen (invalids and elderly men) will be employed in making flax, mats, &c., in the gaol. The conduct of the entire number is good. Two Maori catechists, prisoners, will read the prayers of the churches of England and Rome every morning and evening.” I need scarcely add to what has been already said that these men will be well fed and clothed, and that their liberation at an early period will depend on their own conduct, and on that of their disaffected countrymen in the North Island.

5. The able and experienced Judge of the Supreme Court who tried the Hauhaus prisoners (Mr. Justice Johnston) has written to me in the following terms:—“I am glad to find that your Excellency and your Ministers saw your way clearly about the punishments; and I may now say,—if you will not think that I am assuming too much in the matter,—that I believe *the result is the very best that could have been arrived at*. I am glad to know that Mr. McLean thinks that *one execution* will be as useful as more would have been, by way of example and caution. The man executed at Wellington (Hamiora te Peri) did not evince the ordinary Maori fearlessness of death, and perhaps it is better that such should have been the case.”

6. In my last Despatch on this subject, I drew attention to the strong opinions expressed by Mr. Justice Johnston, in his charges to the Jury and otherwise, to the effect that the general result of these trials has been “most satisfactory,” and that