

“like a national spirit in it that they were ready to sacrifice persons of their own race,—and not only those who in assisting the Government might be said in some kind of sense to be traitors to the Native cause, but harmless women and children of their own blood, merely because they were under the protection of the Government.”

4. Unfortunately, Te Kooti's present position is well adapted for carrying out his intention of destroying that portion of his countrymen on the East Coast of this Island which has remained loyal to the British Crown. A comparison of any large and accurate map of New Zealand with the sketch maps transmitted with my Despatch No. 22 of 1868,* exhibiting the distribution of the Maori tribes, will show that the Urewera Mountains overhang the southern part of the Bay of Plenty as far as the East Cape on one side, and, on the other side, the East Coast as far as Poverty Bay. At most of the points where the rivers flowing down from these mountains enter the sea, there are small settlements of loyal, or (as they are generally called by themselves and others,) “Queen” Natives. All these settlements are peculiarly exposed to sudden raids from the fastnesses above them, which are almost inaccessible to Europeans. It will be seen that the Colonial Ministers are sparing no exertion for the protection of our Native allies, and that (in addition to supplies of arms, ammunition, and provisions,) they have promised a subsidy in money to Major Ropata (the Ngatiporo Chief), Major Kemp (Te Kepa, of Wanganui), and other loyal Chiefs, for the pursuit and capture of Te Kooti. Garrisons of the Colonial Militia, Volunteers, and Armed Constabulary, are also maintained at Tauranga, Whakatane, Opotiki, Poverty Bay (Turanganui), and other commanding points. M. Louis Hettit, and others who have the best means of information, assure me that the systematic employment, by the Colonial Government, of the loyal clans against their disaffected countrymen is making a most salutary impression on the minds of the so-called “King Natives.”

5. Mr. McLean has lately received the following official intelligence relative to the Chief Ropata's movements in the Urewera country:—“His expedition, numbering three hundred and seventy (370) men of the Ngatiporo Tribe marched from Turanganui (Poverty Bay) on the 28th February, following the Ngatapa track. Nothing of importance occurred up to the 5th of March, when, on passing an old camping-ground of Te Kooti's on the Hingarua, the remains of three bodies were found, no doubt refugees from Ngatapa. Before reaching Maungapowhata, two parties of eighty (80) men each were told off, with orders to surprise the pa held by Te Pakaroa (a rebel leader), which was taken. The number of prisoners captured in this pa, together with those taken on the march, amounted to fifty (50). Five of the captured men formed part of Te Kooti's force at his late engagement at Rotorua. After a most harassing march through a difficult country, during which only two days were allowed for rest, the force reached Ohiwa on the 20th, and Opotiki on the 21st March. Ropata, on hearing of Te Kooti's late raid on Opepe, at once started in pursuit; and, although the country is almost inaccessible, he is determined to push on his operations so far as he is able with the means at his disposal.”

6. As the prisoners already captured by Ropata are not known to have taken part in the murders of women and children, and in the other atrocities perpetrated by the rebels, they will (as I am assured) be treated with lenity.

7. I intend soon to visit the East Coast myself, with Mr. McLean, when we will examine thoroughly into the condition of affairs there. It will easily be understood how difficult the task of capturing or destroying the rebel bands of Te Kooti and of the Ureweras must prove, with the comparatively scanty forces at the disposal of the Colonial Government, and in the almost impenetrable mountains and forests of New Zealand, when it is recollected how long the Pindarries and other predatory tribes set at defiance the whole strength of the British Government in India; and how long even small gangs of bushrangers were able to baffle pursuit in the comparatively level and open country of New South Wales.

8. No further intelligence of importance is known at Auckland up to this date.

The Right Hon. Earl Granville, K.G.

I have, &c.,

G. F. BOWEN.

* *Vide* Imperial Parliamentary Papers relating to New Zealand, presented in July, 1869, page 126.