

of the tribes attend. Amongst those who will attend the meeting is Hone Pihama, who was the leader in a notable exploit in the war. General Cameron was encamped in the Wanganui District. The tents had been pitched one afternoon, and the soldiers proceeded to burn off some fern around to prevent the chance of a surprise. Hone Pihama was then against us, and, seeing his opportunity, determined an attack, hoping to kill or capture the General, and so make a reputation for himself for ever. Stealing up under cover of the smoke of the burning fern, the Maoris got close to the tents. The instructions were not to fire, as that would alarm all the soldiers, who were scattered about. One soldier, however, presented himself in such an easy and tempting position, that a Native could not resist, and fired. Immediately there was an alarm; but, as it was, the Natives penetrated nearly to the General's tent, and caused no little damage before they were driven back. Hone Pihama is now an energetic and industrious citizen.

ARRIVAL OF MINISTERS.

The weather to-day has been very stormy, and some begin to doubt whether the "Hinemoa" would be able to get here, or whether, if she did, any communication could be had with her. Shortly after 3 o'clock, during a severe storm of wind and rain, the "Hinemoa" was seen struggling with the seas. Fortunately the surf on the beach was not so great as might have been expected from the wind, and one of the surf boats was launched. The surf seemed beaten down by the pouring rain, and the party got on shore very well. Mr. Jones, of Mokau, went off in the boat, and when Sir George was landed on the beach he was received by a number of the principal inhabitants of the district. A banquet is to be given to the Ministers at the conclusion of the Native meeting. Sir George and party proceeded to the Masonic Hotel, where they remained till 7 o'clock, when they left by special train for the Waitara. Sir George and Mr. Sheehan are to reside at the house of Mr. Halse. The place where the sheds were erected for the convenience of Natives is so wet with the late rains that they will not be able to occupy them, and tents will be put up on a drier site. Shortly after landing Sir George, the "Hinemoa" steamed away to Auckland with Mr. Macandrew. Sir George hopes to be able to get the main part of the business over during to-morrow, but of course on this point there is considerable doubt. I am told that William King will very likely be present after all. The heavy rain of to-day, however, will delay the arrival of many of the Natives.

[From the *New Zealand Herald*, 24th June.]

THE WAITARA MEETING.

(By Electric Telegraph. From our Special Correspondent.)

New Plymouth, Saturday, 5.5 p.m.

THE MINISTRY AND THE MAORIS.—MAORI IDEAS.

A CONVERSATION which I had last night with a thoughtful Maori chief opens up not a few important and delicate points for consideration in relation to the Native policy. I will give it in as nearly as possible his own words. He said, "I do not know that anything completely satisfactory can be achieved at the present meeting. The only measure that would at once settle all matters between the races would be the restoration of the confiscated lands, and that I know is impossible. Those Maoris who have gone in with the King movement are not satisfied, while others think that the Government has been very liberal; for instance, I and my people did not take any part in the last fighting—we have not given the Government any reasons for trouble, as Tawhiao and the Waikatos have done, and yet Tawhiao is to get back all the land remaining unsold in the Waikato, and we are not to have anything restored. If the Government restore to the Waikatos all the land in that district remaining unsold, then they should restore the whole plains which have not yet been even surveyed. Some tribes which gave very little trouble comparatively will lose all their land, and cannot get any returned, because it is all very valuable, and has all been disposed of to Europeans. There is not even-handed justice in this." It must be admitted that there is considerable force in this statement. There is some danger that impossible ideas may be raised in the Maori mind by the restoration of confiscated land. My informant proceeded, "I believe the idea of Rewi in seeking this meeting at Waitara is to seek out the cause why the Europeans went to Waitara. There can be no doubt that the original error which you Europeans committed was in listening to one or two who wanted to sell land, and not recognizing the fact that the whole tribe must be consulted. If the present Ministry want to be successful in their Native policy, they must be firm; and, above all things, avoid vacillation. If they are firm, and deal even-handed justice amongst all the tribes, the Native difficulty will melt away. What you have acquired by force, you must be prepared to maintain by force. I admit that it is impossible you can give the Natives what they seek and would like to have. I think that the confiscated land in this quarter should be sold at suitable prices to settlers, and should be occupied at once. Then the Natives would see the hopelessness of attempting anything, as the Native difficulty would melt away, but to occupy with a settler here and there would only irritate them. I do not think the Natives will give any serious resistance to the survey of these confiscated lands, but they might give annoyance by interrupting the surveyors. Te Whiti considers that justice will not be done until the land is restored. The great idea that was underlying all the war was the anti-land-selling league. The Europeans, on the other hand, I believe, were irritated at the setting up of the King. The originators of the idea not to sell land were Wi Tako and Matene Te Whiwhi, who came to-night with Sir George Grey. They saw that when the Natives were dispossessed of their land the Europeans paid no further respect to them, while those who still had land were made much of. These chiefs brought the idea not to sell land to the Ngatiruanui, who took up the matter eagerly. Meetings were held and two houses were built, and all the land was to be held; but it was felt that something else was wanted to give unity and direction to the movement. I first heard of the idea of a King after the meeting at Taupo. Perhaps the originator was Tamihana Te Rauparaha, who had been to England."

7.40 p.m.

We are all now patiently waiting for weather—that is, for fair weather, which it would seem we are never to have. Sir George Grey is living at Mr. Halse's house, while Rewi is in a comfortable whare at a settlement on the north bank of the Waitara River, close to the bridge.