"Yes," answered my informant, "it is wonderful; but the Maoris said they would beat the Europeans, because their god was before them. I came to your way of thinking after Rangiaohia, which I shall tell you of. We were obliged to abandon the strong pa of Paterangi, because the soldiers got to Rangiaohia, and our supplies would have been cut off; we had a fight at Haerini, near Rangiaohio, and I had three narrow escapes. We had to run for it, and I was pursued by two men on horseback. They were several times very close, and might have struck me with swords. They fired a number of shots, but I escaped them all, though some were very close. I jumped into some bushes and trees, and when the horsemen circled round I popped out again and into a swamp. That escape made me think. I ranged about to find some of my friends, and in the meantime the pa at Orakau was built and occupied—with about fifty others. I sat on the top of Kakipuku and looked at the fighting. We could give no assistance to the Maoris inside. After Orakau was taken we were all scattered. I went back to the outskirts of Maungatautari, and then, after we had gathered together, we went inland to Hangatiki, where we built a strong pa, thinking that the soldiers would follow us. They did not, and after remaining there some time we returned to our present settlement. During our wanderings I had many a hungry day. At Rangiaohia there were plantations, and sometimes two or three men would steal in and get some food. Any cattle or pigs we found we killed. I thought I would not fight any more, but I did go down with a party to Pukearuhe (White Cliffs) at Taranaki. A new law had come out from Taranaki. There was to be no wall before us, but God was to keep the bullets away, and we were simply to stand and fire at the soldiers. I saw the fallacy of that law when it was attempted to put it into practice. I went out with Rewi's brother, Te Raore, and he was killed. I then came back to Waikato with a number of men. Rewi was the constructor of the Orakau pa. He did not like to leave Orakau without fighting for it. Tikaokao, who is dead now was a brave man, and stood on the wall of the ditch at Haerina, with a stick in his hand, calling out to the men to fight on.

So far, I give a story of the war, but must turn to the present.

Te Kooti and his immediate attendants passed through here this afternoon on their way to Te Kuiti. It is said that he is incorrigible—a fault common between him and many Europeans—and therefore Tawhiao has given him a broad hint that he had better absent himself from the meeting at Hikurangi. Nothing has been done at the meeting to-day, and it is thought there will be no speaking till Sir George Grey arrives.

The Natives say that the Ngatimaniopoto are willing to sell or lease some of their lands, but are restrained by Tawhiao and his people. To the King has been committed the land of the Island to hold, and he will not let the authority vested in him go. They say they could get advances on their land at any time; but, if they did so and any person went to occupy, some fanatic amongst the Kingites might tomahawk the occupant, and thus trouble might arise. The staunch Kingites believe they will get back Waikato, and that, if the Pakehas do not restore it, God will. I should not wonder at all if they ask for Waikato at this meeting with the Premier. At present they do not seem to have any idea of coming to a compromise, and in these circumstances it is impossible there can be any settlement. The plan to which the Government will ultimately be driven will be to let them alone, to deal with those Natives who are inclined to look at matters in a common-sense light, and to take care that there is force sufficient at hand to prevent any interference. Would it surprise your readers to know that the Hauhau Ngatimaniopotos spend their evenings in dancing—not the old dances, but the waltz, schottische, polka, and quadrille. In all their vagaries dancing has become a mania with the young folks lately, especially with the ladies. The girls take to their pipes at every spell, but they maintain the character of their sex amongst Europeans for being indefatigable dancers. Both sexes dance admirably, and nearly all the lads and girls play the concertina well.

The land is first-rate here, and they tell me there is a large amount of land in the King country as good as Rangiaohia. If it were opened Auckland's future would be a prosperous one; but how is the object to be achieved?

Friday afternoon, 3rd May.

The food was divided this morning with great fun and bustle. There has been no speaking yet. More than 2,000 Natives are assembled. All inquiries about the objects of the meeting of the Natives present are fruitless. They say it all lies between the King and Sir George Grey—so say the highest Natives at head-quarters. Sir George is expected up to-morrow, and Te Wheoro and others have gone down to meet him.

Sunday.

Saturday was a day of incessant rain, and the Natives of Hikurangi who have not huts for shelter suffered considerably. The roads or tracks near Hikurangi are very bad. Sir George Grey is expected here about eight o'clock, and will go up to-morrow. He will be taken in a canoe a part of the distance. A number of Natives are waiting to escort him up. Rewi has not gone up yet. What turn the meeting will take is not known.

Monday, 10 a.m.

The Government party are getting ready to start up to Hikurangi. A number of Te Wheoro's people are here to paddle Sir George Grey and the Hon. J. Sheehan up in a canoe some miles. There is no news this morning from up country. Te Wheoro says that he did not inform the Native Minister about Rewi's movements. From his own knowledge he was at Mercer, and sent on a telegram he had received. So far as I know, Rewi has not yet stirred from his settlement on the Puniu. Many of the Ngatimaniapotos, however, are at the meeting.

7.15 p.m.

The programme was changed after all was ready for a start, and Sir George Grey decided not to leave Alexandra till to-morrow. The baggage and tents of the party were conveyed several miles up the Waipa in a canoe to a place where the road branches off from the river. I suppose we shall leave here to-morrow morning, and endeavour to make Hikurangi before night, an easy task if the roads were good. I am informed that, after the last meeting, Tawhiao was in good spirits, thinking that something satisfactory might be arranged. Latterly, however, he has not been so sanguine, seeing, perhaps, that nothing we could give him would be satisfactory to his people.