

About noon, Tahana and Te Mokena came down to Ohoutahi, where they stayed for two hours to talk with Pehi and Topia.

About 2 p.m., they came to Hiruharama. Te Kapa first spoke; he told Tahana why we had come up, repeating in substance the words contained in my letter, but added that the reason why they were required to decide on going down at once was because of the obstinacy of Topia, who had said openly that he had, through his influence as chief and priest of the Hau Haus, consented to the murder of Mr. Volkner, and had also refused to make any terms with your Excellency. He was proscribed in consequence, and a price would be put upon his head.

He then asked Tahana if he was willing to go to town and to take the oath of allegiance, to which Tahana replied—"I have already told you at Pipiriki that I am ashamed to go back to the Pakehas because I had no sufficient reason for leaving the Governor and coming over to this side; I was always well treated by the Governor, and without any reason I left him; that is why I am ashamed to go back. My word to Pehi when he went to town was—if the Governor says you are to go to Wellington, or Auckland, or elsewhere,—go; and if Topia had been taken as he went down the river of his own accord, I should have said it was quite right. You have heard the answer of the Pipiriki people; I have blamed them because they have broken their word. I sent no pledge because my way is not clear yet."

Mete Kingi asked Tahana if he could not send a message to your Excellency to say that they would think over your message and perhaps come down in a week or two. Tahana said—"No, we shall not see our way any clearer than we do now."

I then spoke. I went over what I had said in the letter, enlarging more fully on the enormity of a religion which could countenance such awful crimes as they had been guilty of committing; that this horrid religion had been introduced into the Wanganui by bringing the head of a murdered man; when they embraced that religion, they turned their hand against me—a man who had been living under their protection, and entirely for their benefit. More horrible crimes had since been committed with the knowledge and consent of all who had joined this system of iniquity. The Governor was willing to give them a last chance, and to make peace, if they came at once; but now, after having heard of the dreadful crime committed on Mr. Volkner, if they still refused this offer of mercy, they would all be looked on as murderers.

I then said, "Tahana, are you willing to go with me to town, and to take oath of allegiance?" He answered, "I have already stated why I cannot go at present." I said, "I must have a decided answer; the Governor is now determined to know his friends from his foes." He then said, "I will not go." Then I said, "You will risk the consequence of this refusal?"—"I will."

Te Mokena then stood up: "I will not go to town; I will not make peace with the Governor; I sent a present, but it was for Hori Kingi; I will not take the oath of allegiance."

Whilst waiting at Hiruharama for the arrival of Tahana, Mete Kingi and myself were talking with a man named Haimona, from Taupo. I expressed my fears about the safety of Mr. Grace. He said, "If Mr. Grace gets near Taupo, he will not be killed. Te Heuheu has had a runanga with his people. He has told them that Mr. Grace is to be plundered of his property; all his sheep, cattle, house property, &c., are to be divided amongst the natives; he is to be taken prisoner, but his life is to be spared."

In speaking about Mr. Volkner, he said, "Karewera, (Garavel), a Roman Catholic priest, was a Kingite; he was doing the King's work. He has been put to death; that is why Mr. Volkner was murdered. The men who took the oath of allegiance when Pehi did have gone back to the Hau Hau religion, with the exception of Pehi, himself, Hohaia, and one or two others. They say they intend to live quietly, but to keep up that religion."

I have, &c.,

His Excellency Sir G. Grey, K.C.B.

JAMES BOOTH.

### No. 31.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR to the Right Hon. the SECRETARY OF STATE for the COLONIES.

SIR,—

Government House, Wellington, 7th April, 1865.

I have thought it better in reference to my Despatch No. 41, of the 4th instant, to give you the means of at any time answering all the important statements made in Mr. FitzGerald's letter to Mr. Adderley, of the 14th November, 1864.

2. Firstly, Mr. FitzGerald states, "I will now state one fact more the most important I think of all:—

"After the taking of Rangiriri, the Natives sent to sue for peace, the Governor replied that the General must go on uninterrupted to Ngaruawahia, the Maori King's palace, and then he would treat with them. The Natives replied that the General should go there, and then they would treat. They immediately withdrew all their forces to the southward of Ngaruawahia, and our army went up and occupied it without opposition, passing a defile which might have been readily defended so as to cause us great trouble and loss.

"Notwithstanding that the solemn faith of the Governor had been pledged that negotiations should be opened for peace, no communication of any kind whatever was made to the Natives. The army continued to advance, and the Natives to fight with the courage of despair. It is the opinion of many in this country, that just as favourable terms of peace could have been obtained after Rangiriri, as will even now ever be made after all the subsequent and as we believe unnecessary slaughter. You will find the evidence of these facts in the sessional papers of 1863. The letter of Pene Pukewhau and the Governor's reply will be found in E. No. 5d, pp. 6, 7, 8."

3. I have already addressed you on this subject in my Despatch No. 174, of the 30th November last, but I wish to add that every one of the important statements in this paragraph of Mr. FitzGerald's letter, are wholly and absolutely untrue. I wrote to Te Pukewhau from Auckland, on the 6th December, to say that the General must go on to Ngaruawahia, the capital of the Maori King, and the

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