

bullock track for two and a half miles, after which it passed through high fern and scrub along the edge of a broad and deep valley, into which we descended by a precipitous declivity, and after crossing two streams, again gained the high ground by an ascent almost as steep, and enclosed by thick bush. From the nature of the ground, I had no opportunity of making a satisfactory reconnaissance; the tops of the whares, however, being just visible from the near side of the valley, I left the six-pounder guns there, and advanced under cover of their fire, which was ably directed by Lieut. Carre, R.A. In a few minutes we emerged from the scrub and bush on the open, opposite the position, which consisted of an entrenched work, strongly palisaded, with a front of about one hundred yards. The approach was over level ground, flanked on the right by a tongue of bush at seventy yards; on the left front there were fenced cultivations. It would have been a work of great labour and loss of time to get the guns to this point. I therefore took advantage of an undulation in the ground, at the distance of one hundred and fifty yards from the work, and formed the force in the following order, viz.: 57th Regiment on the left, in skirmishing order, with a strong company and the Forest Rangers in support: the 2nd Battalion 14th Regiment extended on the right, with one hundred men in support, the Native Contingent in reserve. The signal for the assault was then given, and the troops dashed at the work with irresistible impetuosity, the rebels kept perfectly quiet until they were within forty yards, and then opened a most severe and unusually well directed fire from the whole front of the entrenchment and the bush on its right. Under this heavy cross fire, a portion of the 57th Regiment, under Lieut.-Colonel Hassard, wheeled to the left, drove the rebels from the bush, and advanced against the right angle of the pa. At the same moment the 2nd Battalion, 14th Regiment, under Lieut.-Colonel Trevor, and the remainder of the 57th, under Bt. Lieut.-Colonel Butler, both, most gallantly led, reached the left angle of the work through the cultivations. The Maoris fought desperately for a time, but in vain; the palisading was cut down, the troops entered the work and carried all before them. The enemy broke and fled down the precipitous densely wooded gully immediately at the rear of the pa, where it was impossible for the troops to pursue them; some of them, however, there fell under the fire of a detachment of the Native Contingent, whom I had sent round into this gully. The whole of the defences, the village, and cultivations, were destroyed.

The capture of Otapawa is, I believe, of the utmost importance. It was a position, I am informed of historical repute for its natural strength, and had the name of having never fallen in any of the Native wars. It was in fact inaccessible for any force except by the way we advanced to it, and the character of the approaches and the nature of the immediate locality of the pa, as well as the strength of its defences certainly were such as in some measure to justify the opinion of the Natives that they held an impregnable position. In the capture of such a position it is not to be expected that our loss could be insignificant. In comparison, however, with the nature of the service the number of our casualties is not great. Seven men were killed and fourteen wounded. Two officers—Lieut.-Colonel Hassard, 57th Regiment, and Lieut. Swanson, 2nd Battalion 14th Regiment—were wounded; and it is with deep regret I have to add that the former officer died of his wounds this morning. In Lieut.-Colonel Hassard the service has lost one of its bravest officers: he led his men with the greatest gallantry, and fell inside the pa nobly performing his duty.

The loss of the enemy I estimate at fifty killed and wounded; the body of Aperahama, the Chief of the place, was found in the ditch.

It is my intention to bring under the special notice of the Secretary of State for War, and of His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, the brilliant services of the whole of Her Majesty's Troops engaged on this occasion; and I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to Major Von Tempsky, commanding Forest Rangers, and to Captain Pilmer and the men of that corps, for their services in co-operation. To Ensign McDonnell (commanding the Contingent in the absence of Major McDonnell, who is still suffering from his wound,) as well as to the Native Contingent, I am much indebted for their assistance. Ensign McDonnell has rendered most valuable aid in reconnoitering and obtaining information, and his intrepid conduct deserves the highest commendation.

On the evening of the 14th I directed the Native Contingent to ascertain the position of Ketemarai, and instructed them to remain near it during the night, and to send me information which would enable me to move against it early on the following morning; for which purpose the force as below\* marched at 4:15 a.m. this day, and proceeding over the plain for two miles in a northerly direction came in front of a line of stockading and earthwork, flanked on either side by bush, and extending across the main track, leading into the clearing in which Ketemarai is situated. The position was carried without opposition, though it had evidently been the intention of the rebels to defend it, for we found provisions and fires still alight inside the work. I can only account for their not availing themselves of so formidable a position for opposing our advance, by attributing it to the dispiriting effect of their severe loss at Otapawa. The force then advanced on Ketemarai itself, which is about a mile within this intrenchment, and consisted of four palisaded pas in eschelon, enclosing a large number of whares; these were all burnt, and as far as practicable, the cultivations destroyed.

The regular Troops then marched back to camp, and the Forest Rangers and Native Contingent remained to search the bush in the vicinity. This they did for several hours, during which they came across some small parties of the enemy (twenty-one of whom are reported to have been killed), and destroyed the following villages, viz., Te Whenuka, Te Moro, Kanihi, Mawhitihito, Te Paki, Otukere, Aoteroa, and another large pa, the name of which is not yet certain, but supposed to be Ahipaipa.

The same afternoon I sent out 300 men of the 2nd Battalion 14th, 50th and 57th Regiments, with the three six-pounder Armstrong guns, the whole under Lieutenant-Colonel Butler, 57th Regiment, to destroy the rebel village of Ketemitea, which, as already stated, he had previously visited. It was now completely destroyed by him as well as another strongly fortified pa in the neighbourhood, Puketi,

\* Three 6-pounder guns, with proportion of non-commissioned officers and gunners; under Lieutenant Carre.  
2nd Battalion 14th Regiment—200 rank and file; under Lieutenant-Colonel Trevor.  
50th Regiment—110 rank and file; under Captain Doran.  
57th Regiment—200 rank and file; under Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Butler.  
Forest Rangers—40 of all ranks; under Major Von Tempsky.  
Native Contingent—150 men; under Ensign McDonnell.