

1,500 feet. It would certainly be a good day's work for loaded men to get up this hill. Having left the Natives and Europeans at the Whakatane, I pushed on with what remained of the Corps of Guides and reached Lieut.-Colonel St. John's camp, feeling sure that he was in possession of the pa, though the Arawas could not be induced to believe it. The cheers of our men, in answer to my bugle, could not be mistaken even at a distance of half a mile in the bush. Lieut.-Colonel St. John surprised Omarateani much as Major Roberts' column did Ahikereru, and killed about as many, though the women escaped. He had been waylaid at Hukanui very much as the other column was, and after that I feel sure that the parties before each column were recalled to Ruatahuna, to cover the retreat of the women.

The enemy made a very poor fight at Ruatahuna, abandoning it about the time the other column came in sight, but inflicted some loss upon Lieut.-Colonel St. John's advance. On the whole the two columns have suffered lightly; but two valuable officers, whose death is deeply regretted, Lieutenant White and Sub-Inspector Travers, were killed while with Lieut.-Colonel St. John. The Natives from the Whakatane side gave little assistance, and the fighting devolved upon the Europeans. They would not even scout, but obstinately remained in rear. Now, as these are tribes who have often proved their valour like the Arawas in open country, an idea may be formed of the prestige we have had to combat in the Native mind during this expedition.

It was impossible next day to push on. We had wounded, and to leave a post was almost impracticable, for the pa and all the ground about was commanded on every side, and the garrison could only obtain provisions by foraging at a distance. I therefore made up my mind to submit to a delay of two days, which the whole of the Natives said they required.

The 9th and 10th were lost, except inasmuch as during these days foraging parties explored the country, destroying kaingas and food. On the 10th a trifling skirmish took place, which I supported in the belief that it was a serious attack. It proved nothing of the kind, and Lieut.-Colonel St. John very properly put an end to it; but the Natives made up their minds that it was really Te Kooti at whom they had fired so much, instead of a few unhouse-d Uriweras. This notion grew so strong that I agreed to patrol the country next day. All this delay was contrary to the interests of the expedition. Our true policy was to press on and anticipate Te Kooti's march from Waikare Moana. We had every reason to suppose that the march would not be opposed except by him, and knew him to be at the lake. Meanwhile, no persuasion would induce the Pikau men to go back under an escort to Ahikereru for more ammunition and to remove the wounded, and the combats going on all round the camp with a few scattered individuals, though wasting powder, could not be entirely stopped.

On the 11th we had arranged a movement to explore the vicinity, when Te Kooti's advanced guard came in sight about one and a half mile off down the Waikare track. I sent out Fox, and supported him with 100 men under Major Roberts. Fox drove back the enemy brilliantly enough, though smartly fired upon. After this he laid an ambuscade, and the troops apparently retreated. Te Kooti's advanced guard again moved on, but the front man was shot. On this Te Kooti sounded a bugle, and the ambuscade party retired. Fox gave as his reason for drawing in his lines closer to the pa that the enemy was in great force, and sure to attack on the only open ground near. I waited for this attack in vain, however, Te Kooti's party being evidently more alarmed than ourselves, their sentries having fired frequently during the night at imaginary assailants.

Next morning I moved forward again towards the lake, but the Natives did not make up their bundles, and went light. The Arawas were to make a circuit, and the Europeans to take the direct attack. This they did in very good style, and carried the hill with feeble opposition. The enemy retreated down the gorge, leaving a picquet. We then gave time to the Arawas to get round, and again moved on. The picquet fired at Major Mair and some seven or eight Natives who had got in front of our men, and very slightly wounded Martin of the Ngatipikiao. All the Natives at once retired, leaving Major Mair, who very gallantly rushed forward with only one man, and discharged all the chambers of his revolver at the picquet before it had time to reload. The picquet ran off, followed by Major Mair and the Europeans. The front Arawas reached the track from their circuit just as the picquet was passing, and fired. H. Pukuatua (Fox being unable to go from his cough) led the Arawas, and, as the Arawas generally do, made a dashing advance. Te Kooti was drawn up on a spur, and fired a volley. The Arawas replied, and pushed on, capturing and killing three men who could not escape. After this Te Kooti hurried away, pursued down the valley by the Arawas, followed by the Armed Constabulary. At length after a couple of hours the pursuit came to an end, and the Arawas returned, reporting Te Kooti out of reach. Not having our packs, I agreed unwillingly to defer further pursuit till next day, and to collect food meanwhile. The whole tribe now assembled on the hill first taken and began speaking. They would go no further, they said, though willing to fight here; we were short of powder, let us send back. I agreed to this, and returned to camp, leaving Major Roberts entrenched on the hill. All evening the korero went on. At last the chief Fox came to me and said the Arawas (whose decision would of course entirely guide the Whakatane Natives) wished to go back, that no bearers would go next morning for ammunition, and that he advised me, if this proved to be the case, to call out those who wanted to go through with me. I decided to go on if 100 could be got. At the same time, having an arm of the lake to pass to reach Tiki Tiki, I made up my mind not to attempt to push on without some Natives. It proved as Fox said, and only sixty with himself and Rewi came over to my side.

I now received a letter from the Arawas to the effect that next day they would go back. It now turned out that a private arrangement had all along existed among them not to go beyond Ruatahuna, which, as they had been clearly and expressly told that they would have to go to Waikare and Maungapowhatu when they were engaged, was not straightforward. However, I could not alter their determination, and Mr. Clarke, who might perhaps have done so, was unluckily away. Seeing this, I determined to go to Waikare without them, if they would carry out the wounded, which the Whakatanes were found willing to do. I now issued all the reserve ammunition equally, and drew aside my camp from that of the Natives on the lake side. In the night Fox found that others of his tribe had come up determined neither to go with the Arawas nor to go to the lake. He did not like to abandon these people, nor to break his promise to me. In this dilemma he asked me to decide for