

was damaged. I communicated this to you as soon as I was able. I now sent back to Tauranga orders to Captain Moorsom and his Cavalry to march by the Lakes to the upper part of the Kaingaroa, to meet Sub-Inspector Richardson, the Opotiki Cavalry, and the Taupo Natives, and to hold the main road to prevent any attempt on the part of Te Kooti to cross to Taupo. I have since learned that Sub-Inspector Richardson and his troopers have been diverted to assist in the Mohaka expedition, but I think Captain Moorsom should be strong enough till I reach the plains.

The rear guard came up on the 20th, after dark, and I occupied that day and the next in vainly trying to find a channel up the Rangitaiki for the "Clyde." This river has been popularly believed to be navigable for steamers of three or four feet, at all events for many miles, but proved, after careful survey, to be impracticable. After a flood, possibly a steamer might be got past the obstacle, which is a reach of mud flat about a mile in extent, and after that it is all deep water for fifteen miles; but for the "Clyde," or any steamer drawing more than eighteen inches, it is not navigable in its normal condition. The harbour too is dangerous, but the line is so much nearer, and possesses so many other advantages, that in spite of these difficulties I have resolved on adopting it. It was with pain that Mr. Richmond and I learned, by the arrival of the "St. Kilda" with your telegram, sent on by Lieut.-Colonel Gorton, that the movement of troops had not been early enough, by threatening Te Kooti in the Uriwera country, to prevent his making another foray on the Coast. The tragical occurrences at Mohaka—a spot so safe from harm, to all appearance, that even the Maoris of the place had not considered it in enough danger to leave a sufficient guard for their kainga, while absent on an expedition themselves—show how necessary it is to undertake, however late in the year, the attack upon the Uriwera fastnesses, from which troops had always hitherto recoiled, and which has afforded Te Kooti a refuge hitherto. The difficulties of such a campaign are chiefly those due to long land carriage, and to the unknown character of the country. It is known to have stopped the Ngapuhi long ago, and it has hitherto been impossible to bring troops to its outskirts. What fortifications may exist in it is unknown, and a very great part of it can only be supplied by provisions carried on men's backs. There is no sound land for some distance from the coast—and if there was, there are no drays obtainable. Mr. Richmond has decided that this enterprise should be at once attempted by the troops, now diminished in number through the necessary discharge of some of the Arawa Constables and the diversion of the Cavalry, under Sub-Inspector Richardson. The Arawa and Ngatipukeko Tribes have therefore been invited to take a part by the two main arterial roads, and Mr. Richmond left on the 21st to organize a third column to penetrate by Waikare Moana. Each column will be liable to attack by Te Kooti's band and the whole Uriwera Tribe. No supplies can be depended upon from the country; indeed even meat cannot be procured here, but under existing arrangements I think it probable that all three columns will be able to meet or communicate about the beginning of next month. The line of supply must be by the Rangitaiki River, which must be ascended by canoes with stores to Otipa, and thence provisions must be packed for twenty-five miles to a spot in the Kaingaroa Plains. From that point the prevalent opinion is that pack-transport can be employed through four miles of bush to Ahikereru, which is twelve or fifteen miles further on, and is the gateway to the Uriwera country from the Taupo Plains. This point is expected to be disputed, but the main stand, it is anticipated, will be at Ruatahuna. The column which enters by this side I purpose accompanying myself. A second column will advance by the Whakatane Gorge, under Lieut.-Colonels St. John and Fraser, who have both been some distance by that route, and should arrive at Ruatahuna in good time to co-operate. The Wairoa Column will possibly not be able to cross the lake, but in that case will go to Maungapowhatu by the land track; and if successful in carrying any works at Ruatahuna, it is possible that I may be able, with part of my force, to reach that point also. But I beg the Government not to calculate on a complete success from these operations. Nobody better than I can appreciate the difficulty before me, having last year spent eighteen days in hard marching on the mere outskirts of this district. The country is already doubtless under snow. The hills are so steep, that five miles as the bird flies is a long day's march. The enemy is sure to ambuscade and delay our march. Our convoys of provisions may, and very probably will, be attacked in coming to us from the rear; and our force being largely composed of Native allies, to whom cold is hateful, and on whom it exercises an effect which they cannot shake off, may disperse like melting snow at any moment, even on the eve of completing all the objects of the expedition. All that can be done, with a full foreknowledge of these rocks which may shatter our enterprise, the Government may depend upon our doing; but this undertaking is so different from any other as yet attempted, and so much more liable to miscarriage, that I deem it a duty not to be sanguine myself, or to lead the Government to expect too much. As yet, sufficient supplies are not even landed to move, but an advanced position has been taken up on both lines from this side, and a considerable quantity of stores have been sent on.

If the weather permits landing within the next day or two, I hope the question of supplies being landed will not aggravate our difficulties, for the steamer is in the bay with stores on board.

Whether the troops will return by the routes they take in advancing, or whether they have to push through to Wairoa for supplies, will depend on circumstances I cannot foresee, but in either case the Government may depend on the most regular communication I can maintain.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Defence Minister.

G. S. WHITMORE, Colonel.

### No. 36.

Copy of a Letter from Lieut.-Colonel LYON to the Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

SIR,—

Patea, 26th April, 1869.

I have the honor herewith to forward Captain Hawes' report of his expedition up the Whenuakura River.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. Colonel Haultain, Wellington.

WILLIAM C. LYON, Lieut.-Colonel,  
Commanding Patea District.