

Hon. Mr. RUSSELL to Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

Napier, 18th May, 1869.

“ST. KILDA” from Wairoa last night, with Towgood. Natives did not move yesterday, on account of heavy rain. Will go to-day. Thirty Mohaka Natives ready to join Witty after we send him the men from here. He will then have force of about eighty men. Will go by Poutere and join Herrick at Onepoto. Witty had reconnoitred right up from Mohaka by Poutere and had communication with Herrick's camp, and seen no trace of Hauhaus. They must have gone to the Lake, probably crossed it. No pa at Putere, and if our Natives had gone as they promised, and the rebels had been followed up with vigour at the time they were laden with spoils, they might have been caught. “Wellington” just coming in. “St. Kilda” will go alongside and transfer men. Very cold but wind light, not much swell. Richmond's pontoons will be shipped about 2 p.m., and probably Wairoa will be accessible to-morrow morning.

RUSSELL.

Hon. Mr. RUSSELL to Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

Napier, 22nd May, 1869.

WHITMORE says Te Kooti is said to have 150 men at Titi Tiki on Waikare-Moana, but accounts differ as to food there. It is only just being dug up, and if plentiful must be all untouched. With the 100 men to be sent, and including Wittey's mixed reinforcement, say 45 men and the 25 marched yesterday for this, Herrick should have about 350 Europeans, exclusive of Wairoa Militia and Volunteers, say 50 men, and probably 200 Natives, namely, Ropata 100, Ihaka and Wairoa 70, Mohaka 30; say 500 altogether. Mostly good reliable men, and should be able to accomplish something on the lake as well as against Maungapowhatu ere long. It is annoying not being able to forward pontoons on account of landing. It will be Monday at soonest before they can be landed. I trust Herrick is making canoes near the lake; he took lots of tools for purpose. We must see about stores for Wairoa. The ten tons flour and biscuit, ex “Star,” is being now transhipped in harbour to “St. Kilda.”

RUSSELL.

Hon. Mr. RUSSELL to Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

Napier, 24th May, 1869.

DESPATCH came in at 1 p.m. from Captain Bower, Wairoa. Reports as follows:—Lieut.-Colonel Herrick joined forces at front on 18th; they are now four miles in advance of Tukurangi, busily employed road-making. Frightful weather for some days past great hindrance. 120 Ngatiporou, with Hamlin, started on 19th; remained at blockhouse, Te Kapu, till 21st; at daybreak started for front. 100 Natives from Wairoa left latter place same day. Had not joined Herrick when he wrote on 21st. Team of bullocks, with sledge, etc., complete, gone to front with Naval Brigade and stores required by them. Also a boat; every effort will be made to get it on the lake. Sledges all ready for pontoons when they arrive. Herrick meant to make a movement onwards and take up fresh position to-day. Between Wairoa and the front there are 450 men, about half Europeans. A post at blockhouse, 15 men. Another at Te Ariki, 40 men. All this is satisfactory so far, but progress very slow.

RUSSELL.

Hon. Mr. RUSSELL to Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

Napier, 25th May, 1869.

BAR will do to-morrow; Pahia, Wairoa pilot here, says so. Do not detain steamer. Despatches last night from Herrick, of 18th and 20th. Had been steadily making roads, waiting advance of Natives, which had been deferred from wet weather. On 17th saw three of enemy's scouts close to our camp, which was at Tukurangi, about eight miles from Onepoto; they were coolly collecting corn—probably some of Te Waru's men. The men were in good spirits, but complained much of the cold. Camp much higher than the lake. Herrick thought there would not be much difficulty dragging canoes and rafts up, unless road in front much more uneven than in rear. He characteristically adds,—Nothing is impossible if we only make up one's mind to do it. On 20th Herrick again refers to continued bad weather. 110 Ngatiporous and 100 Wairoa Natives had started, and were expected in camp Saturday, and as enemy's fires were seen all over the opposite range, it was likely they would have some fighting on Sunday. Evident preparations were being made to oppose them at lake. With the large force at disposal Herrick did not anticipate any serious opposition to seizure of Onepoto. Heard that Maungapowhatu is only two days' march round the lake, but it can be considerably shortened by water transport. Had got a boat up as far as canoes came, and will take it with him when he advances. Canoe navigation only thing he is now doubtful of. Natives very slow in movements, and do not like water work this cold weather; pack-horses had been two days idle in consequence. If canoes fail, must resort to boats. Says he never had his patience so much tried, but is now resigned. Captain Withers had been made Field Adjutant, in which capacity he is most useful,—by far the most energetic officer in expedition. This is all. You must not remove Withers for the present. Could not Lambert act as Paymaster here?

RUSSELL.

Hon. Mr. RUSSELL to Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

Napier, 25th May, 1869.

SIX p.m.—Despatch just come in from Herrick (by my new alternate days line), dated 23rd, 8 a.m., Tukurangi. He had received my despatch, with full information of Whitmore's movements, and his purpose to send 100 men round. Ngatiporou, as he finished his letter, were just in sight, struggling up the ranges. He was to wait an hour for them, and if they refused to march he would go without