

if in force he can attack Taupo with advantage; or he can act offensively on the rear of the Arawa settlements in the Lake District.

Having been informed that it was the intention of the Arawas stationed at Ohiwa to abandon that post, and being impressed with the necessity of holding it if possible, in order to support as well as keep open our communication by land with Opotiki, I visited them on the 28th instant, in the steamer "Clyde." In my conference with them they represented to me, that with a force of forty men (the minimum according to their engagement with the Government), in these disturbed times, it was impossible for them to undertake to hold Ohiwa, especially as Rakuraku, with the Upokorehe, had gone over to the enemy. I asked how it happened that the whole force of seventy men was not there. They replied that many of the force at first raised had left the place in disgust. That in their position they were isolated from trade, and that it was unreasonable to expect that men, women, and children could live for two years without clothes. That it was this state of things that had caused many to leave; and the present disturbed state of the country, superadded to their other difficulties, had made it a matter of necessity for them to abandon the place.

From my own personal knowledge, I can state that the complaint made by these people is well founded; and after consultation with Major Mair, who was present at the latter part of the conference, I decided and promised to keep them on full pay for two weeks, on condition that they thoroughly destroyed or brought away all Rakuraku's kaingas and stores of food, which latter, I understand, are great—and that after that they would receive 2s. per diem, subject to the approval of the Government. On these terms they engaged to stop, to raise their force to seventy men, and to put the place in a thorough state of defence. Acting on the belief that in the occupation of Ohiwa in a great measure depends the safety of Opotiki, I desire the concurrence of the Government in this matter. I left Ohiwa last evening (29th), arriving here at 8 o'clock a.m.

On the eve of my leaving for Ohiwa a messenger was sent to me from Maungatapu (in Tauranga), to inform me that Maihi Pohepohe, Hakaraia's nephew, had again made his appearance. The Maungatapu Natives, wishing to act rightly, desired my advice. I told them to "return and request Maihi to leave; that with our knowledge of his proceedings, the active part he had taken in connection with his uncle Hakaraia in creating disturbances, not only in this, but in other districts, I could not but view with suspicion and distrust his present assurances of peace and good will. That when the country was comparatively quiet, he declined to come in; and that after his communication with Ngaiterangi, wherein he said 'that with separation from the pakeha alone was life,' I could not look upon him as a friend; I therefore desired that he should go away in peace."

On Sunday, the 29th instant, the Venerable Archdeacon Brown visited Maungatapu, in his capacity as missionary; and it was reported to me that he had an interview with Maihi. I called upon the Archdeacon this morning, with the view of obtaining a correct account of what passed between them. The Archdeacon obligingly furnished me with the following account:—That on Sunday he went to hold service with the Maungatapu Natives. That hearing that Maihi was in the settlement he entered several of the Native whares in search of him, and that he was told, in every instance, that Maihi had gone away that morning. The Native deacon, however, who accompanied the Archdeacon, found means of discovering his whereabouts, and induced him to meet him.

Maihi gave the Archdeacon to believe that I had written him a letter which was "a slap in the face;" that the letter to the Ngaiterangi attributed to him, in which the sentence I had quoted was contained, was a forgery, and that it had been written by Hohepa Hikutaia. That as to information we could get plenty, if the "friendly Natives" would only divulge it. And, as a proof of his good intention, he stated that Waikato was to be attacked on Friday (26th), by Ihaka and Te Tapihana (there was another chief named, which the Archdeacon could not recollect). Alexandra was the point to be attacked. The Natives at Taupo had risen. That Tauranga would not be attacked for the present; that that would depend upon the contingency of Hakaraia and Te Kooti "making peace" (really, I imagine, coming to terms). This is the substance of what passed.

To show what dependence can be placed on this man's statements, I would remark that I have never written him a letter. That I am quite satisfied that the letter to the Ngaiterangi is no forgery, but is in Maihi's handwriting, having carefully compared it with other letters of his—records of this office. It is rather remarkable that he should have volunteered the statement of the attack upon Waikato. It does seem that the Hauhaus are doing all they can to puzzle and mystify us in every possible way.

Finding that the steamer "Clyde" is no longer needed, it is my intention to send her back to Auckland immediately.

I have, &c.,

H. T. CLARKE,
Civil Commissioner.

To the Under Secretary, Native Department.

P.S.—I also enclose my reply to Captain St. George's communication of 26th instant.

Enclosure 1 in No. 17.

Copy of a Letter from Captain ST. GEORGE to Mr. H. T. CLARKE.

SIR,—

Kaiteriria (Rotokakahi), 26th March, 1869.

I have the honor to send you the following report. I arrived at Motumako on the 24th instant, and found that I had been wrongly informed by Keepa and Rewi as to Te Kooti being there. I stayed there on the 25th, as I thought it probable that you would send a letter on.

On the evening of the 25th, three men—Pau, of Ngatimanawa, Tamati Ngatiporou, and Penetito Ngatiawa—arrived at Motumako from Ahikereru; they represent that they were taken prisoners at different times by Te Kooti, and escaped yesterday while on a cattle-hunting expedition. They brought the following news:—

Te Kooti is at Ahikereru with only 100 men; the other 200 have returned with the women and children to Ruatahuna. Kooti is very short of ammunition, having only two or three caps a man.