

“whether a more perfect organization might be introduced among the Native Contingent, by a large infusion of European commissioned and non-commissioned officers. Tribes exclusively led by their chiefs cannot be permanently relied upon. There is every reason to believe that under trusted European leaders they would be so. I am sure that the Secretary of State for War will be ready to facilitate any arrangement for enabling officers in the army to take service either for this purpose in the Native Contingent, or in the European force now maintained in the Colony.” With regard to this subject, Mr. McLean, the present Minister for Native Affairs and Defence, and other public men intimately acquainted with the Maoris, consider that the experiment suggested by your Lordship would probably be full of danger. They observe that the Maori clans in arms for the Crown resemble, in some respects, the so-called “Irregular” Native corps in India. Now, the European officers attached to such corps are men who have received a long training in India for that particular duty, or who have shown special fitness for it by acquiring an intimate knowledge of the languages, customs, and feelings of the men whom they would have to command. It is notorious that there would be a constant risk of dangerous mutinies and rebellions if ill-selected or inexperienced officers were attached to the Sikhs, the Ghoorkas, or to other corps composed of the more warlike nations of India. Several retired military officers, who had become settlers in New Zealand, are already employed in the Colonial forces; but it is observed here that there is no school in the British army analogous to that supplied by the Indian Service, in which officers could acquire a thorough knowledge of the language and feelings of the Natives of this country; and that the control of proud and impulsive savages like the Maoris demands the most delicate management, especially as they are not, like the Native corps in India, overawed by a large European force. It is believed by many persons that the loyal clans know perfectly well that if, on the removal of the last battalion of regular troops, they choose to unite with the hostile clans, the Maoris could probably make themselves masters of all the North Island, except the cities of Auckland and Wellington; just as, if the European troops were removed from India, the Sikhs and Ghoorkas, by uniting with the Hindoos and Mussulmans, could drive the English out of the whole country, except, perhaps, the Presidency cities. The general feeling of the Parliament, and of the leading public men of all parties in this Colony, now seems to be, that the fighting should be done by the Colonial forces only; but that it is of vital importance to retain one regiment of regular troops, as a garrison for the towns (at the cost of whatever sum the Imperial Government may require), with a view to the moral effect which the presence of a small body of the Queen’s troops produces on the Native population, both friendly and disaffected.

5. I may be permitted to take this opportunity of reporting that I have of late carefully studied, among other high authorities, the Despatches of General Cathcart respecting the measures adopted by him while Governor of the Cape, during the last Kaffir war,—a warfare closely resembling, in many points, that waged by the Maoris. In particular, Captain Young has been directed to prepare places of refuge for the country settlers and their families on the plan recommended by General Cathcart, and which cannot be described better than in his own words:—“My object being to retain possession of the country gained, what I want is to have established in the right place, where present circumstances require it, a defensible nucleus adapted for a large or small force, in which ten men, perfectly safe themselves, may command a radius of two or three hundred yards by the fire of musketry, and with a gun six hundred yards, so that within that area a large camp may be covered and protected during the absence of the principal part of the force on patrol.

“This may be effected by the construction of one small central keep or tower, of sufficient height to command and overlook all the low huts and tents outside of this tower. I would reserve a certain area enclosed with a low wall or breast-work.”

And again, “The object is that for which church towers were originally, no doubt, intended in early stages of society, where a more civilized race planted themselves among aborigines; viz., a rallying point from whence a very few men,