

Owing, therefore, to the prejudice and fear of half a dozen weak-minded men, the liberal offer of the Government has been rejected, against the better judgment and eager desire of all the young men of the tribe.

G. S. Cooper, Esq., Under Secretary, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
JAMES BOOTH.

Wanganui, 26th February.

P.S.—I have just seen Major Kemp, at whose earnest request the Government consented that this road should be made for the convenience of the Natives, and he is very much put out at the idea of these Natives agreeing, in the first place, to have the country explored and the road surveyed, and now refusing to have the road made when a considerable sum of money has been already spent on it; but he says he feels quite sure that pressure has been brought to bear on the old men by the Hauhaus, and earnestly requested me not to report to Government their refusal to have the road until he should have an opportunity of questioning them himself on this matter. I told Kemp I must send a report, but I would also send his statement. Kemp's suspicions are against Tahana and Topia, on account of the King's letter.

Tahana went up the river whilst I was at Ranana. We had had a meeting, and it was decided that the road should be made. When Tahana heard of it, he said to me, "Why, does not the murder of the Pakeha (Mr. Todd) at Waikato satisfy you, that you and your Maoris must wish to do this work and be murdered also." Two days after this the road was refused by the Ngatirangi.

JAMES BOOTH.

No. 35.

HAIMONA and others to the Hon. D. McLEAN.

To MR. McLEAN,—

Putiki, 24th February, 1871.

O Sir, salutations to you, who are the parent of men and of work.

Mr. Booth has returned from Ranana. The road at Ranana has not been agreed to. He came to Koriniti, and has explored the country for a road between that place and Murimotu.

This is my word to you about the money (set apart) for roads. Do not you take the money (set apart) for my roads (and appropriate it to another purpose); rather do you show your good feeling to us who are doing the work of the Queen. The road on the Mangawhero, laid off by Mr. Field, will be joined by this from Koriniti. This is all.

From HAIMONA,
TE POARI,
KOMENE.

No. 36.

MR. BOOTH to MR. COOPER.

SIR,—

Wanganui, 25th February, 1871.

I have the honor to report that, on my way down this river from Ranana on the 21st instant, I was stopped by the Natives at Koriniti, who requested me to explore the country through which they propose to make a line of road to Murimotu and Taupo. I accordingly explored the country, and find that a leading ridge runs from Koriniti without a break until it descends into the Mangawhero Valley, and, crossing the river by an easy ford, it ascends a saddle in the leading ridge between the Mangawhero and Wangaehu Rivers, where it joins Field's line of road at a place called Parapara. The Natives, fifty of whom are now at Parapara and other places on the Mangawhero, say that if Field had crossed the Mangawhero at this point, he would have found a much easier and flatter country on the other side. I am doubtful, however, about the river being fordable. If on further exploration I find that Mr. Field's line can be taken across the Wangaehu at this point, the road from Koriniti to Parapara will answer every purpose of the proposed Ranana Road; and there will not be a quarter the work. It will, likewise, from running along a ridge, have the advantage of being dry. The Natives also are more deserving of encouragement, having laid off part of the road and done some of the cutting at their own expense. Haimona, the Koriniti chief, is most desirous that part of the money granted by Government for the Ranana-Taupo Road should, now the Ngatirangi have rejected it, be appropriated to the purpose of making a good bridle track from Koriniti; but Government will not, of course, be able to give any answer to this request until it is found whether or not Field's line can be made available as far as Parapara. With reference to further exploring of the latter line, I have to state that I have written to the chief Winiata, who will, I expect, be here in the course of four or five days, when I shall explore the country in question.

G. S. Cooper, Esq., Under Secretary, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
JAMES BOOTH.

No. 37.

MR. COOPER to MR. BOOTH.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Wellington, 10th March, 1871.

I have the honor, by direction of Mr. Fox, in the absence of Mr. Gisborne, to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters of the 21st and 25th ultimo, and, in reply, to inform you that no attempt will be made to push the Ranana-Taupo Road through the Ngatirangi country.