

A number of the Ngatiraukawa came from Wellington, and accompanied the Ministerial party, some of them for the purpose of attending the King meeting, and others to attend the Native Land Court at Cambridge. Among the principal Natives from Wellington I may mention Hema, Te Ao, Tiema, Ranapiri, Hinai, Potana, Paora, Tamere, Pene, Arama, Pepe, Pamawara, Pine, Te Konga, Piripite, Ka Puihi, Pipipi, Tipimuiha, Watana, Makarra, Touhere, Te Whakoheke, Te Kaite, Te Himi, Himirama, and Mete Tamata. Among the party were also Mr. Potts, of Canterbury (formerly a member of the General Assembly), the chiefs Paora Tuhaere, of Orakei, Henare Kaihau and Hori Tauroa, of Waiuku. The party left Ngaruawahia at 3 o'clock by the steamer "Delta," a commodious and comfortable vessel, for Alexandra; this being her first trip on the river. The distance in travelling was forty miles, and the scenery on both sides of the river was charming and diversified—a perpetual feast to the eye. The steamer reached Alexandra about 9 o'clock. The party were met by Major Mair, Major Te Wheoro, and Mr. R. S. Bush. A large number of Europeans and Natives were present. Arrangements were at once made for the journey to Hikurangi. This morning the party were received on board two large war canoes and conveyed to the Kopua. From thence to Hikurangi the journey was made on horseback. The total distance from Alexandra is about eighteen miles, of which the canoe journey would take off about six. The road from the Kopua to Hikurangi is heavy, and, being over wood and fern land, is difficult to travel in wet weather. Over 200 Natives had to make the journey on foot.

Nothing is yet heard of the movements of Rewi and the Ngatimaniapotos. The number to be present at the meeting is, at a moderate computation, stated to be close upon 5,000.

The story about Te Kooti being turned out of the meeting-place on account of drunkenness is quite correct. He and about thirty of his followers arrived there, and before they had time given them to unsaddle their horses it was discovered that they were under the influence of liquor, and they were sent away summarily, without being allowed to partake of food. Te Kooti was very wrath at being thus ejected, and threatened to burn down the buildings of the Natives south of Kopua. This threat reached those assembled at the meeting-place as a thing that had actually taken place, and a strong party were despatched for the purpose of inflicting condign punishment on Te Kooti and his followers, but it was ascertained on the road that it was only a threat, and that the buildings had not been destroyed.

The King is very reticent, and it is supposed he will not show his cards until the arrival of the Native Minister.

The weather has been very trying upon the assembled Natives, more especially as they have been kept upon short commons, the distribution of the main bulk of the food being delayed until the arrival of the European visitors. There is no doubt about the *bonâ fides* of the Natives in their desire to meet the Government; but every effort is being used, principally through bribes and misrepresentation, by a number of land speculators to frustrate the object of the meeting, and even to prevent its being held. Their exertions have proved futile, as there is every prospect of a very successful and satisfactory meeting. These interested and unscrupulous intermeddlers will find that in their case "the time is out of joint." Their conduct is treated by the King with merited contempt. He forbids them to come near the place of meeting.

The latest about the Ngatimaniapoto is that they will probably request Sir George Grey and the Native Minister to meet them at the Upper Mokau: the meaning of which is that, as the Lower Mokau has been opened for European traffic, they appear to desire that the movement should extend from that place as its starting point. This would seem to indicate the correctness of the stories about the division between the Ngatimaniapotos and the Waikatos. Both parties appear to be making arrangements as to who shall reach the Government goal first.

With reference to Sir George Grey's memorandum to the Governor *re* the despatch from the Secretary of State, the following telegram was received by him from His Excellency the Governor at Alexandra last night: "I have had much pleasure in forwarding by telegraph to the Secretary of State the memorandum of the Government relating to defence. The former memorandum giving the amount of grain available in New Zealand was forwarded by mail.—NORMANBY." I may state that the quantity of grain available in New Zealand, if required, is 275,000 tons. It is worthy of note that New Zealand has been the first colony appealed to by the Home Government, and no doubt her inhabitants, when required, will do their duty nobly and well.

When Sir George Grey arrived at the place of starting for Hikurangi an alteration was made in the arrangements on account of the unfavourable weather. It was found that the Native party who were to accompany him up could not possibly reach Hikurangi to-night on account of the delays. As it is contrary to Maori etiquette for visitors to arrive late in the evening, and as the King Natives there wished to give a great reception, they did not like Sir George Grey arriving at a late hour. The Natives requested him to remain with them for the night at Kopua, and proceed to Hikurangi in the morning. Sir George thought it better to remain at Alexandra for the night, and proceed on horseback with the Native Minister to Hikurangi next morning, overtaking on the road the Natives who were to start from Kopua early in the morning, so that they might all reach Hikurangi together.

A messenger has just arrived from Rewi to Sir George Grey, informing him that, in case he should not go up to the Hikurangi meeting, he hopes Sir George Grey will call and see him on his way back. Sir George Grey, in reply, stated that he would prefer to meet Rewi with the other people, but he will endeavour, if time allows, to visit him at the Puniu, on his way back to Auckland.

One of the finest sights witnessed by the people of Alexandra was the arrival a few days since of seven war canoes, each capable of holding some sixty persons. They were elaborately painted and decorated at the stern and stem with feathers and other ornamentations in true Maori style, including finely-carved figures. Considerable labour and no little taste were expended in the fitting up. A large number of Natives proceeded in two of these canoes to-day as far as Kopua, accompanied by Major Te Wheoro, the Hon. Mr. Sheehan, and several Europeans. Sir George Grey and party will proceed to Hikurangi early to-morrow morning on horseback. There is a favourable change in the weather, and it promises to be more pleasant under foot. The arrangements are completed, and no time will be lost