

participation in them : so strictly has the policy of non-interference been hitherto carried out, that although the Hua natives are known to be very indifferently armed, and almost destitute of ammunition, their application for assistance was steadily refused by the Magistrates. The whole of the Ngamotu natives (with the exception of Hone Ropiha Te Kekeu and his adherents, who have joined with Puketapu), have determined to maintain a strict neutrality, unless their own safety or that of the settlers should be menaced.

10. With regard to the Puketapu natives, they are at present in a state of great excitement, and will, I have no doubt, take the first opportunity that may offer of wreaking their vengeance on Katatore's party. In this they appear to look for support from their relatives in Cook's Straits. They have placed a tapu on the Northern road, excepting as regards Europeans or Her Majesty's mails—their arrangements being that Tamati Waka shall stop all access to the town by the beach, while the Hua natives are to block up the passage by the Devon road.

11. The Waiongana and Waitara natives are at present holding aloof, and, from all I can learn, intend to continue so, unless the quarrel be taken up by the Government, when they will regard the affair as a general land question. In this event, Katatore will be looked upon as the leader of the opposition, and be joined by all the tribes who are averse to the sale of land to the Europeans.

12. On referring to the memorandum which forms enclosure No. 7 to this despatch, it will be seen that Katatore requested Mr. Turton to convey to me an offer to sell to the Government the piece, containing about 300 acres, lying between the inland boundary of the Bell block and the Mangoraka river. Of this offer I have as yet taken no notice, nor shall I do so until I am favoured with your instructions upon the point, as it appears to me intended merely as a peace-offering, in the hope that its acceptance by the Government might be looked upon as an atonement for the blood he has shed.

I have, &c.,

G. S. COOPER,
District Commissioner.

Mr. Commissioner McLean,
&c., &c., &c.
Auckland.

No. 22.

REPORT FROM NATIVE SECRETARY, DATED 27TH JANUARY 1855.

Auckland, January 27th, 1855.

SIR,

I have the honor to report for the information of His Excellency the Officer administering the Government, that in accordance with the instructions communicated on the 27th ult., I proceeded to Taranaki on that day per steamer Nelson.

2. On my arrival at Taranaki on the afternoon of the 28th ult., I found everything quiet, but there was evidently an unsettled feeling amongst the native population from the fact of their going about their occupations with arms in their hands and from their commencing to put their paha in fighting order.

3. From enquiry, I found that the first affray, in which Rawiri, the Native Assessor, one of the most respected natives of the Puketapu tribe, and six others by Katatore, partly arose from Rawiri attempting to cut the boundary of a piece of land which he had offered for sale to Mr. G. Cooper, the Land Commissioner of the Taranaki district. It appears that Katatore had long ago stated his intention of retaining this land and had threatened to oppose any one who should offer to sell it ; Rawiri, however, on account of some quarrel with Katatore, proposed selling the land and was desired by Mr. Cooper to cut the boundary.

Rawiri proceeded accordingly with twenty-two others, on the morning of the 3rd August last and had succeeded in cutting some part of the boundary line, when Katatore and party rushed down from his pah, and after warning Rawiri twice without effect to desist, fired and killed him and six others, four were severely wounded and four slightly wounded.

4. With regard to the second affray, it originated in the following cause. I hear a Native Assessor had reason to suspect that his wife had been guilty of adultery with a young man named Rimene, belonging to the Ngatiruanui tribe, residing between Cape Egmont and Wanganui ; and on receiving further proof by the confession of Rimene, he had directed him to be shot by a young man named Hori, who immediately proceeded to where Rimene was sitting, and deliberately killed him by a shot in the breast. Information of this act having been sent to the Ngatiruanui, they assembled on the 20th December to the amount of 380 armed men, and made an assault on Ihaia's pa, at Manuka, on the Waitera river, about eleven miles from the town of New Plymouth. Ihaia made an able defence, but being hard pressed, some of the Puketapu tribe made a diversion in his favour, and succeeded in covering his retreat to a pa named Mahoetahi, some miles nearer to the settlement. On this occasion Ihaia's party had six killed and five wounded, the Ngatiruanui five killed and ten wounded.

On the 22nd the Ngatiruanui appeared disposed to renew the fight, but finally came to the determination of returning to their homes. A fresh matter, however, arose which for some time threatened to embroil the Puketapu and other natives of the district with the Ngatiruanui. It was the expressed determination of the latter to return homewards coastwise, through the settlement of Taranaki this intention was however eventually abandoned, and on the 25th the whole party set off on their