

No. 35.

THE GOVERNOR TO MAJOR-GENERAL PRATT, C.B.

Government House,
Auckland, 2nd October, 1860.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No 297, of September 29th, in which you state that the plan of harassing the insurgents by secret, sudden, and constant attack by bodies of Troops without baggage, is, in your opinion, impracticable.

I agree with you entirely in thinking that it is of "the highest importance, not only to the successful termination of the present war, but to the future peace of the Colony, that the Maories should become convinced of the superiority of the Troops in warfare, and of the hopelessness of their endeavouring to gain any material advantage over us."

For this reason, I suggested a measure which has not yet been tried; but I beg you not to suppose that I desire to interfere in any way in the conduct of Military operations, or do more than offer for your own consideration a suggestion which had occurred to others as well as myself.

I have, &c.,

T. GORE BROWNE.

Major-General Pratt, C B,
Commanding H.M. Troops,
&c., &c., &c.,
Taranaki.

No. 36.

MAJOR-GENERAL PRATT, C.B., TO GOVERNOR GORE BROWNE, C.B.

(No. 289.)

Head Quarters,
New Plymouth, Taranaki, 25th Sept., 1860.

SIR,—

I have the honor to report, for the information of your Excellency and the General Government, that with a view of harassing the Tribes of the South I directed a flying column, strength as per margin, under the command of Major Hutchins, 12th Regiment, to proceed to the Tataraimaka Block and to attack certain Pahs said to be erected therein, and any stockades along the road.

The party proceeded on the 19th inst., and by the reports sent to me, reached Oakuru on the first day without meeting any opposition. On the 20th instant, they entered the Block and found and destroyed five Pahs with double stockades, strongly entrenched, and placed in *échelon*, a set of strong rifle pits and three villages; these the enemy had deserted on the approach of the Column using the tactics they now assume of vacating all Pahs in the open country which could be invested and trusting to those Pahs so situated on the edge of the bush or within it, as will enable them to retire on being pressed, without the possibility of being surrounded.

Major Hutchins then crossed the Kotikura river and pitched his camp about a mile beyond and it, and proceeded with a strong reconnoitering party along the road, under what he considered to be reliable information that there was a small Pah a short distance in advance. After a march of about 3 miles through a very difficult country he found three Pahs, one very strong and newly erected, were on his left in the bush and which it was impossible to surround; under these circumstances he returned to his camp, and carried out the instructions he received, which were to remain three days and clear the block of the enemy &c, driving in any cattle he could find, and returned yesterday to New Plymouth.

During these operations the weather was exceedingly tempestuous and the roads nearly impracticable for heavy guns; all the steamers put to sea and the Wonga Wonga, which left the Manukau on the 18th instant with your Despatches, only arrived in the roads this day.

I am now getting all information with respect to what can be done against the Southern Tribes and Captain Seymour R.N. has been kind enough at my request, to say he will proceed to the South, with a view to obtain information relating to any landing places their may be.

It is stated that in about a fortnight the weather will be more favourable, and I shall endeavour in every way to harass the enemy by continual movements of Troops, and stop the cultivation of the potatoe and other crops in the open country; and I am informed that the Taranaki and Ngatiruanui Tribes have quarrelled and that the latter have not only taken away from the former any plunder they had obtained, but have, in addition, plundered the Taranaki Tribes of any property they had of their own.

By this expedition and the former one on the 10th instant, the enemy have been much harassed and many of their fortified places destroyed. The Tribes who it is supposed were cultivating have been obliged to leave their fields and assemble to protect their Stockades which have been burnt under their eyes without being able to inflict any loss on us; a continuation of this will, I feel sure, have more effect in bringing the war to an end than any attack on places in the bush, where, though success would attend our arms, still the loss would be severe and the enemy must after all unavoidably escape.

I have, &c.,

T. S. PRATT.

Major-General, Commanding.

His Excellency,
Colonel Gore Browne C.B., Governor,
&c., &c., &c.

Royal Artillery—
1 captain
1 sergeant
16 rank and file
Royal Engineers—
1 captain
1 sergeant
12 rank and file
12th Regiment—
1 field officer
1 captain
4 subalterns
6 sergeants
1 drummer
150 rank and file
65th Regiment—
2 captains
6 subalterns
16 sergeants
4 drummers
250 rank and file
Militia—
2 captains
4 subalterns
4 sergeants
2 drummers
62 rank and file
Mounted Corps—
1 sergeant
10 rank and file