

Aided by the strength of their country, and fighting in their own fashion, the Maoris are brave and formidable enemies, and they boast with some truth that since our first arrival in the Colony the British Troops have gained no decided advantage over them though our Arms have always been immeasurably superior, and our number often in excess of theirs.

Finally, I would beg the favour of your protection and kindness for the friendly Natives—more particularly for the Chiefs Mahau, Apeharua, Ihaia, and Teira, and their men: they have proved themselves faithful allies, and their lives would be instantly sacrificed if they were deprived of our protection. It is however quite true that all Maoris will communicate intelligence to the enemy; so far from considering such conduct shameful, they look upon it as right and, chivalrous. It is possible that Ihaia and a few others might not communicate with the enemy under any circumstances, but their women and their followers would do so. This inconvenience however being known, may easily be guarded against, and should not induce us to look with suspicion on men so thoroughly attached to us as these Chiefs have proved themselves to be.

I would beg the favour of your communicating freely with Mr. Parris, who is placed at your disposal, and will give you the best information on Native Affairs; I do not desire that you should be influenced by him in opposition to your own more experienced judgment, but as he possesses my confidence and that of the Government, I am anxious you should hear his opinion on Native matters. I beg to assure you of my most earnest and active support in everything which you may consider needful to bring this unhappy disturbance to an early conclusion.

I send you copies of some papers printed for the Assembly which may be useful to you.

I am, &c.,

T. GORE BROWNE.

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

No. 30.

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

Head Quarters,
New Plymouth, 30th August, 1860.

SIR,—

(No. 271.)

With reference to my personal communication with your Excellency on the 26th instant, as to future operations here, which had been contemplated, I have the honor to acquaint you of the occurrences that have taken place, which must of course modify and alter them.

On the 25th inst. the rebel force which had intrenched themselves opposite to the camp on the Waireka suddenly retired, and their position has been destroyed by our force. It is not easy to give you any definite reason for this move on their part; but it is believed that the death of two Chiefs, named Abraham Witoi, Hoani of Ngatiruanui, who were killed, also Reapena, Tahana, Witi Wane, and Meneiapa, who, with several others not known, were wounded, has led to this step; part of them have gone back to Tataramaki, others to Tukuporu, not far from Omata. Again, on the 23rd inst., Major Nelson reports that Wiremu Kingi's pah, Puketakauare, was in his possession and being destroyed; it was believed to have been vacated on the same day on which the rebels retired from the Waireka; a small party of Waikatos are known to have crossed the Waitara on return homewards with plunder, and W. Kingi's people are stated to have returned to a pah in the interior.

I have written to have the site of the pah reported upon, with a view to its occupation as a Military Post if found suitable, which I believe it to be.

It is not easy to understand these simultaneous movements; our friendly Natives believe them to refer to an attack on the Town, but this is all conjecture.

As yet Her Majesty's Ship "Fawn" has not arrived, nor has the "White Swan," so that none of the families—who have all been warned—have yet been embarked for Nelson. I have, however, arranged to tranship the mails and passengers on the "Airedale" to the Victoria, which proceeds this evening to Auckland, while the former takes as large a number of the women and children as possible to Nelson. The Victoria will remain in the Manukau to bring your European Mail to Taranaki on the 9th proximo, and will during the interval get some necessary repairs made to the Ship.

A body of Natives were reported as being about two miles north of the Town on the Waitoakaie on the 29th inst., and I sent out a party of 250 rank and file to attack them, but not a Native could be seen, all having retired to the bush.

I shall keep your Excellency informed as to our further movements consequent on the altered state of affairs.

I am, &c.,

T. S. PRATT,
Major-General Commanding.

To His Excellency, Colonel Gore Browne, C.B.,
Governor and Commander-in-Chief, New Zealand.