

No. 24.

THE REV. A. PURCHAS TO THE HONOURABLE THE NATIVE MINISTER.

Otaghah, April 24, 1863.

SIR,—

In compliance with the request of Mr. Gorst, all the property belonging to the Otaghah school, that could be conveniently removed, and seemed to be of sufficient value to justify the expense, has now been sent off. The last loads left this place to-day, and will I hope, reach Mangatawhiri early next week. An inventory has been made of the things which have been left behind.

The school premises have been put under the charge of Hohaia Ngahiwi and Pineaha Te Mura, who will occupy portions of the buildings, and look after the sheep and other property remaining on the ground. You are probably aware that Te Paea Potatau, the sister of Matutaera, has undertaken to prevent the ground and buildings being occupied by Rewi or any of the natives opposing the Government.

Mr. Gorst, I believe, promised on behalf of the Government, that Hohaia and Pineaha should have sufficient salaries to maintain them, but as far as I am aware no definite sum was fixed. If I am not out of order in so doing, I would suggest that Hohaia should receive £50 a year, and Pineaha £30 a year, and that some clothing should also be sent for each of them. The former had nearly all his clothes destroyed by the fire at St. Stephen's school, and the latter has a very limited supply.

All the boys whose friends would not allow them to leave with the school, with the exception of two, have returned to this place and will form a small class under Hohaia's charge. This is altogether a voluntary arrangement on the part of Hohaia and Pineaha.

I have, &c.,

A. G. PURCHAS.

The Hon. the Native Minister.

No. 25.

THE REV. A. PURCHAS, TO THE HONOURABLE THE NATIVE MINISTER.

Otaghah, April 25th, 1863.

SIR,—

Up to a late hour yesterday I intended leaving this place to-day, but in consequence of information received last night, I have decided on remaining at least a few hours longer. I have also kept Mr. James Fulloon, whose services have been of great value to us in this time of trouble and difficulty.

I think you have been informed, that an armed party of Ngatimaniapoto left for Taranaki on the 18th. The original intention was that a large body of men should go, but it was at last resolved, after much discussion, that a part of their fighting men should go to Taranaki and that the rest should be employed elsewhere. Therefore only about 200 men went under the leadership of Takerei of Mokau, Tikaokao, Hikaka and Te Kaharoa. Their destination is Waitara and not Tataraimaka; the meeting having decided that they would not attack the troops at the latter place, but endeavour to drive out all they found at Waitara. W. Kingi Te Rangitake, is, I believe, still at Kihikihi, or in the neighbourhood of that place. He talks of returning to Waitara, and says if he goes back, there will be plenty of fighting.

A great discussion has been going on at Kihikihi between Rewi and his followers, together with Reihana on the one side, and Te Paea, Potatau, and Patara, of Ngaruawahia, on the other. Rewi's side are urgent for an immediate descent upon the Ia (with the view, as I am told, not of attacking the troops, but of making a raid against the settlers), while Te Paea and Patara strenuously oppose the plan. I do not know whether the question is settled or not; but I think it desirable to give you the earliest intimation in my power, of the existence of the project. There appears to be every reason to believe, that if Te Paea and Patara succeed in dissuading Rewi and Reihana from trying to carry out their plan, an attack will be made upon Raglan. I have heard this positively stated by two or three persons, but do not feel sure about it. As regards the project of sending an "ope" (party) down the river, it is certain that it was the subject of warm discussion up to a late hour yesterday. If Rewi should not succeed in silencing the opposition of Te Paea and Patara, I believe I shall have immediate notice, upon which I shall either ride into Auckland as quickly as possible, or send off a special messenger at once. If, on the other hand, I should find that an attack is to be made upon Raglan, I will use every effort to send word to Major McGregor.

W. Thomson and Tioriori have expressed their entire disapprobation of the proceedings of Rewi and his people, and, I believe, will prevent Ngatihaua taking any part in the conflict which appears to be impending. I would beg to suggest that it is highly desirable that the present disinclination to war on the part of those chiefs and their people should be encouraged as much as possible. From all I can gather, it would not be a very difficult matter just at this moment to detach Ngatihaua and a considerable part of Ngatiapakura from those violent men, who, according to the openly expressed opinion of the more thoughtful of their neighbours, are bringing ruin and destruction on their people. The Potatau family are also deeply mortified at what has been done and said by Rewi and his companions. Te Paea assures me, that she has stayed with her brother against her will, and that, if the violent men carry the day in their discussion, she will at once quit Waikato and return to Mangere. Nor should I be in any degree surprised, if Matutaera were to follow her example. His own near relatives have admitted to me in private conversation, that he has no