

fallen on the field of battle, had been buried like dogs—thrown into the ground without coffins. I at once assured him that I would have their bodies exhumed and coffins made for them, and that they should be buried wherever he pleased; and further, that a suitable monument should be erected to the memory of them and all the brave men who had sacrificed their lives for the Pakehas on the field of Moutoa. Kawana Paipai went away, with his heart, if no longer sad, at any rate greatly lightened.

Thursday, the 19th.—We left Parikino early. The fresh in the river (it having been raining nearly all yesterday) much increased. On arriving at Atene (Athens) I found it was not their intention to land; but on my declaring that it was my determination to visit every pa, whether friendly or hostile, they paddled to the landing-place. This pa really consists of two pas, distant from each other about a couple of hundred yards, the one occupied by friendly natives, the other by the rankest Kingites and scoundrels, headed by old Hamarama, the brother of either Pehi or the late Hori Patene (I forget which). At this pa, situate midway between Tawhitinui and Wanganui, Matene and his gang, had they succeeded in forcing the river, were to have halted for the night. An ample commissariat had been provided for them, and the next morning the whole of Hamarama's mob would have accompanied them in their descent upon Wanganui. Our interview with Hamarama was brief. Hamarama, after greeting us, expressed himself as much hurt at our apparent intention to pass his pa without landing. I replied I had landed to tell him that I was well aware of the designs of himself and his followers, to warn him against persisting in them, and to let him and other Kingites know that the Government were not only arming the loyal natives, but were prepared, if necessary, to protect them with troops. His reply was to the effect that he was an old and infirm man, that he took no part in such matters, that he stood on the outside, that I must speak to Pehi, whatever Pehi said you must do, you will be able to make arrangements with Pehi. Hori Kingi, who appears to have a intense contempt and hatred of the people of this pa, then stood up and said, "Hamarama, I have only a few words to utter. I am going up the river to speak to Pehi, when I return I shall have a word or two to say to you," and off we marched to our canoes. The meaning of Hori Kingi's words to Hamarama is this—Hori Kingi has made up his mind that he will have no Kingites in his rear, between his advanced post and Wanganui, and that if Hamarama does not quietly and speedily accept this polite notice to quit, he will summarily eject him. We arrived, just as it was getting dark, at Otumairo, and knowing that several of the wounded men were at Koriniti (Corinth), a few miles higher up, I urged that we should push on; but they pleaded that it would be a gross breach of Maori etiquette to approach after dark a pa where there was a war party, even though the war party was a friendly one. There was no getting over this, and I had ceased to argue in the cause of the wounded, when luckily a messenger arrived with a letter from the chiefs at Koroniti, who had heard of our being on our way up, urging that I should come on at once and bring the doctor with me, as some of the wounded were very bad. After some hesitation, and very manifest reluctance, the chiefs consented to my going, providing me with a most ample crew. At Koriniti we found seven wounded men, the majority of them very severely. Dr. Fletcher dressed their wounds, and extracted a ball from one of them, and I made arrangements for their being started off to Wanganui early on the following morning.

Friday, the 20th.—At this pa (Koroniti) we met the chiefs Mete Kingi and Haimona, who were on their way to Wanganui to receive instructions as to their future proceedings, but who stayed here as soon as they heard I was coming up. Last night I addressed the people in the runanga house, and as at this pa all the leading surviving chiefs who were engaged at the battle of Moutoa were present, and gave me in the presence of their people, the minutest details of the fight, it may perhaps be well here to give an account of the battle of Moutoa. Matene and his followers, immediately on their arrival on the Wanganui river, entered into negotiation with the friendly natives for permission to pass down the river to attack the town of Wanganui; but not only were all their overtures indignantly rejected, but they were told that their passage would be prevented, no matter at what sacrifice of life. Matene then said he would wait two months, if at the expiration of that time the loyal natives would give way. The latter, at length, sick and wearied of these negotiations, on Friday, the 13th May, sent a special messenger to Matene and his fanatics proposing that they should do battle on the following day at a certain hour, on the island of Moutoa. The challenge was at once accepted, it being stipulated that neither party should attempt to surprise the other, or in any way violate the conditions of the duel. The time fixed was the break of day. The island of Moutoa, almost midway in the river, may be about 300 yards long and 20 wide, and about 12 or 15 feet above the level of the river; it is thinly covered with manukau scrub and fern, but presents certain irregularities of ground which afford considerable shelter, and except when there is a fresh in the river it is surrounded by a bed of shingle. On the day of the battle there was so little water in the river that the friendly natives on the left bank had not to wade probably more than thirty yards through water not more than a foot or eighteen inches deep to get to the island. The rebels located at Tawhitinui, nearly opposite the north-eastern extremity of the island, could only reach the island by canoes, the river between it and the right bank being both deep and rapid. The friendly natives say that they mustered some 300 strong, and that the rebels did not number more than from 120 to 140, of whom not a few were mere boys. Before daybreak a party of the loyal, headed by Hemi Napi, were on the island, and posted themselves at the extremity at which their foes were to land. They were shortly followed by the remainder of their force under Mete Kingi. The advance party was formed of three companies, one, consisting of Roman Catholics, and numbering ten men, were led by Kereti; another, consisting of nine men, were commanded by Hemi and Riwai; and the third, numbering fifteen men, was led by Aperaniko and Haimona. The reserve companies were some distance in the rear. Matene and his fanatics landed out of seven canoes on the shingle spit without opposition about 7 a.m. Their forces were arranged in a similar way to that of the loyal natives. Immediately after they were formed they commenced their incantation, shouting "Hau, hau!"—Up, up! and using gestures not unlike the passes made by mesmerists. They laboured under the strange delusion that while they themselves were invulnerable, their opponents would be forced by their incantations to approach close to them without power to offer any resistance. For two hours were these incantations kept up, the advanced companies being not more than twenty yards from each other. As soon as the first shot was fired by one of the rebels (Hoani Winihere, of Pipiriki) the opposing forces slowly advanced till they were within thirty feet of each other, when a volley was exchanged. Several fell on