

## No. 27.

Copy of a Letter from Colonel WHITMORE to the Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

SIR,—

Patea, 19th March, 1869.

I have the honor to report that on the 14th instant Major Kemp explored the right bank of the Patea River, and being Sunday, I allowed the rest of the troops to rest. The enemy, "headed" by our men, was compelled to ascend the Patea over very bad ground, and I was not sorry to spare my men a march in pursuit, which could evidently be saved by waiting till they crossed, as they were certain to do without being pursued. On the 15th I moved in two columns, Major Kemp and the Arawas crossing by the ferry I had established at Hukatere, proceeding only far enough to satisfy themselves that the enemy had really crossed the Patea, and then returning and entering the bush behind Mokoia. The other column which I accompanied took post at Manutahi in bivouac.

On the 16th, Lieut.-Colonel Lyon, with a strong detachment, patrolled the country towards Taumaha, but failed to discover traces of the enemy. Later in the day Major Kemp reached the same point, having fallen in with traces of the enemy, and reporting him in full retreat towards Whakamara.

I now made up Major Kemp's column to 350 men by bringing out all the Wanganui and Arawa Natives, who, for various reasons, had returned to camp at Patea, and adding sixty Europeans, volunteers from the Armed Constabulary, under Acting Sub-Inspectors R. Watts and Northcroft. By 1 p.m. this column had entered the bush in the direction of Whakamara, with three days' food.

At 10 p.m. Major Kemp reported that he had come up with the enemy, and that, as a strong pa had been some time ago built in the bush near the kainga, he thought it desirable that further force should be brought up to surround it. Lieut.-Colonel Lyon, who commanded in my absence, immediately pushed on all the Constabulary, some 250 to 300 in all, and reached Major Kemp, after a fatiguing march, by daylight. I myself arrived about the same time, when we were evidently not known to be in the vicinity.

Titokowaru and others were heard haranguing the people, and lamenting their great losses at Otauto, and the women were holding a tangi all night. Major Kemp and the Arawas made a very long detour to get to the rear, which cost many hours. Meanwhile, unfortunately, a mounted scout rode almost into our hands, and, finding the risk he had run, fired his revolver and galloped away. Our men did not fire for fear of giving further alarm. Soon after the Hauhau scout in the bush discharged his piece, and the enemy must have at once made off. Our advance was made at once, but the enemy was gone. The troops were much fatigued, and disgusted to find that the enemy had not stood in the pa, which, though there, had not been occupied; but the light column, after cooking, resumed its march, with the determination to close with the enemy in whatever position he stood, as he is evidently panic-stricken. Whakamara is a place never before visited by troops, and even settlers have not been allowed to go there. It is a very large kainga, and had a very elaborate topmast flagstaff on it, which, of course, I cut down. The troops, being without food or blankets, could not follow the enemy, except the light column, but they halted and occupied the whares, obtaining a supper of pigs and potatoes.

All the force was disappointed at failing to have a brush with the enemy, and it may be confidently expected by Government that, should we again fall in with Titokowaru, no obstacle will be suffered to prevent the troops charging him.

To-day my camp equipage is being moved to Turo Turo Mokai, where the troops now are, and I expect Major Kemp to be there by to-night or to-morrow, and it is probable he will have inflicted some loss on Titokowaru, who cannot wholly escape.

From Turo Turo Mokai the pursuit may be carried on to Te Ngaire or Turangarere, but must ultimately take the direction of Waitara; and I intend, as soon as I can possibly decide he has gone thither, to send on a column to Waitara by land or sea, and to follow him myself through the bush, till I have done him all the injury in my power.

I have ordered Captain Hawes, with detachments from the garrisons behind, to look up the Waitotaras; and when they are punished, I hope I may be able to report these operations at an end.

The troops are immensely improved, and are daily becoming more and more valuable.

I have the pleasure to note your letter regarding the Ngatiporous, and shall leave orders for them either to join me at Taranaki (where they may be most useful if the enemy makes for Waitara), or to land here; and I beg that the "St. Kilda" may be ordered to come straight to Patea, without calling at Wanganui and waiting orders.

The Hon. the Defence Minister, Wellington.

I have, &amp;c.,

G. S. WHITMORE, Colonel.

## No. 28.

Copy of a Letter from Colonel WHITMORE to the Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

SIR,—

Taiporohenui, 21st March, 1869.

In continuation of my last report, I have to inform you that on the 18th Major Kemp, after Whakamara had been taken, and his men had cooked, continued the pursuit of the enemy by his trail, and at sunset fell in with their rear. They attempted to lay an ambuscade for Kemp's advance, but were attacked so quickly and with so much determination that they could not hold their ground; but they sprang off so rapidly and dispersed so quickly, after delivering their fire, that only one could be killed, and (as we subsequently learned) one wounded badly in the skirmish. Kemp however pressed on, clambering up a precipice and forcing the enemy to abandon his already-prepared sleeping place, again fired on him, and inflicted some loss in this and other similar skirmishes during the following day. The sixty European Volunteers, from all Divisions of the Armed Constabulary except No. 1, followed the Natives, and kept up, notwithstanding their heavy marching order and want of experience, and at the first shot were always found to rush off to the front. This is a very