

him. As unwilling Natives would be of little use to me, and as the difficulties before us were still greater than those we had overcome, and it was very doubtful whether we should be able to find our way to Waikare in the snow without guides, I had no real choice but to give up that portion of the operations. Accordingly I gave orders to march back by Oputao on another track, and nearer the lake, which was the only considerable kainga not destroyed as yet, and after burning it returned to Ahikereru on the 16th. The enemy did not molest our march, nor seriously harass the other column, at which, however, a few shots were fired at first. On the march Major Mair and the Arawas destroyed the Horomanga kaingas, and arrived at the mouth of the gorge this morning, having safely and carefully brought down our wounded. The total loss of the enemy it is difficult to say exactly, but twenty bodies were found (one was a brother of Whenuanui's). Fifty prisoners have been taken. Immense quantities of provisions have been consumed or destroyed, and every kainga of note, except the settlements of Maungapowhatu and Waikare, have been destroyed. The prestige of this unknown and difficult country has been lessened, and for the first time in their history the "Tuhoe" (the old and favourite name of the Uriwera) have seen a war party enter their country, pass completely through it, sit down and occupy their principal settlement, and leave it without any serious loss. As it has turned out, Lieut.-Colonel Herrick did not suffer from the want of that co-operation I was unable to afford him, which reconciles me to the disappointment. In all their former wars the Uriwera have hunted their assailants out of the mountains with terrible loss, and this quite accounts for the evident anxiety, not to say fear, observable among our Native allies throughout this expedition. I find it difficult to say, without fear of being thought to show partiality, how admirably our men have behaved throughout. Living on potatoes, labouring under heavy packs, with their clothes torn to rags, and their boots destroyed, their cheerfulness and ready obedience at all times cannot be too highly praised. Poor fellows who were bleeding in their feet, who have had hardly a day's rest since November last, and in spite of the quantities of clothes they have purchased since then, can scarcely muster a sound garment amongst them, were yet ready and anxious to face the Huirau snow-covered heights, and to risk possible starvation or a long retreat, from the moment they heard of my wish to go to Waikare. Toiling up these precipitous hills, or wading in the beds of the slaty rivers, they could always keep up with and continue the march at a moderate pace longer than the Maoris; moreover, during the whole expedition they did not waste a single round of ammunition, nor throw away one shot when keeping sentry in the bush. If there was anything to be done they were at once ready; and when no duty was required from them, roamed about the country foraging, destroying crops, burning kaingas, and seeking the enemy's scouts in their several hiding-places in the vicinity. No rations were issued after the 8th, and Lieut.-Colonel St. John's column was rationed to the 7th only. I had 3 lbs. of bacon per man carried and issued gratuitously to the men after that, and with that assistance they made no complaint of their fare.

The officers have all done their duty extremely well, and have carried the same loads and fared the same as the men.

Lieut.-Colonel St. John deserves my full recognition of his energy in pushing on to Ruatahuna, and conduct of his column. Major Roberts also proved that he has qualities of a very superior order as a commander, and showed the greatest attention to his men.

Mr. Clarke, who so kindly took charge of the Arawas, deserves at my hands the warmest thanks for his zealous and valuable assistance.

I must not omit to mention Captain Moorsom, commanding the Tauranga Cavalry Volunteers, who reached his post before the troops arrived at the plains, and who held it in spite of the extreme inclemency of the weather, though disappointed in the arrival of Captain Richardson, left by the Taupo Natives, and unable to obtain any other food but potatoes for a long time. He has since been of great use in assisting to bring up supplies with his gallant and efficient corps.

Finally, I desire to bring to the notice of Government the services rendered by the chief Fox, who has conducted himself in a specially creditable manner, and supported me throughout. The chief Rewi also followed his example in this respect.

I am in hopes that this force may speedily be established firmly in this district. This fort is very well situated, and well built, and I am now about to commence the work requisite to make the line available for bullock-drays to Fort Alfred.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Defence Minister.

G. S. WHITMORE, Colonel.

P.S.—My diary has just been returned to me, having come out with the Native Column. I send on Lieut.-Colonel St. John's report, and shall transmit the diary by next mail, a portion of the same period being described in this.

### Enclosure in No. 39.

Copy of a Letter from Lieut.-Colonel ST. JOHN to Colonel WHITMORE.

SIR,—

Pata Hoata, 9th May, 1869.

I have the honor to report that, according to your instructions, I left Opouriao on the 4th instant with the force as per margin,\* and arrived that night at Tunanui. On the 5th I reached Waikariwhenua, but could not proceed further on account of the delay in the arrival of the Native Contingent. On the 6th I began the ascent of Te Wharau hill, and in the afternoon, at the foot of it on the further side, surprised the kainga called Omaru Teangi, where we killed six men (Lieutenant White, Opotiki Volunteers, who had charge of the scouts, killing two himself).

\* Armed Constabulary :—2 Inspectors or Field Officers, 4 Sub-Inspectors, 8 Acting Sub-Inspectors or Subalterns, 2 Assistant-Surgeons, 1 Senior Sergeant, 20 Sergeants, 242 Rank and File. Native Contingent :—1 Field Officer, 144 Rank and File. Pikaus :—35 Rank and File. Total, 421.