

would take land, and hold it until the matter was settled. He was quite aware those present had nothing to do with the matter. He knew the persons. They had been troublesome for a long time, and he had been very patient with them, but now they had gone beyond the law he intended to see the matter through. He should take the road, the railway, and the wire through their land, and that was the satisfaction he intended to get from them. The only way they could show they had nothing to do with the matter was to assist him to get this satisfaction from the Natives who had thus committed themselves. He did not wish to talk much, but asked their assistance. When he returned from the settlement, where he was going, he would be very glad to talk with them. They should not think he was acting without right on his part."

Tukukino and Tareranui, and, in fact, all of the old chiefs, were afraid, in the event of the Hon. Mr. Sheehan carrying out his determination of at once proceeding to Okahukura, one of the settlements of the Ngatihako, to find out and arrest the perpetrators of the outrage, that armed resistance would be made, and that he would be fired upon, as the chance then offered would be too good for the Ngatihako to lose. After a short deliberation, the Hon. the Native Minister, acceding to a request made by them to him, requested me to proceed to Okahukura, accompanied by a number of the younger chiefs. I accordingly did so, despatching a special messenger to warn them of our approach. On our way up the Waihou River we laid down plans for our guidance against possible eventualities. When we reached the settlement, which we did at 1 p.m., 31st ult., we found Epiha, Pakara, and three other men, and five women. After the *uhunga* which seems to be usual in such cases, and most of the party which accompanied me had by slow degrees approached the question with which we had been charged—namely, that of demanding "that the persons who had shot young McWilliams should be handed over to be dealt with according to law"—I made a formal demand in the name of the law, not knowing at that time who were the perpetrators of the outrage. Epiha replied that he himself was the man, and that he would not come to the Court; he was willing to be tried by the runanga of Hauraki, but not by the pakeha law.

On my way back to Paeroa I learnt from a young Ngatihako (Paera Tuinga) who returned with us that the actual perpetrators of the act were Pakara and Epiha, the two men we had seen, and who replied to our party; that the shooting party consisted of three, Pakara, Epiha, and Kahutaiwa, son of Kaama, a celebrated Maori doctor—these three proceeded from Okahukura towards the survey party, the latter remaining behind at the edge of the bush in which the line was being cut; that Pakara fired the first shot, his gun being charged with small shot, the discharge taking effect on McWilliams's hand and breast; immediately afterwards Epiha fired his gun, which was loaded with ball-cartridge, the ball passing through the young fellow's thigh. These statements having been made by the culprits themselves, and describing the wounds as they appear on their victim's person, are, I think, sufficient evidence of the truthfulness of the statement.

We reached Paeroa at 5.15 p.m. Immediately on my return I communicated with the Hon. Mr. Sheehan, who shortly afterwards had an interview with Mr. Inspector Thompson; and it was then arranged that an attempt should be made that night to arrest the whole of the Natives we had seen at Okahukura; that the Ministerial party were to return in a steamer that night to the Thames; that Mr. Wilkinson and myself were to proceed part of the way down the Waihou River in the s.s. "Pearl," then lying alongside the Paeroa wharf, which was to follow the other steamer, in order to lead the Natives to think we had all left; that we were to return to Paeroa at midnight, and should there be joined by Mr. Sub-Inspector Kenny and six of the Armed Constabulary force, and Mr. Inspector Thompson and the whole of the No. 3 Scottish Volunteers available. Our plans were, however, frustrated by a series of unforeseen eventualities. First, the s.s. "Pearl" was unable to leave the wharf, as the captain could not be found, and we therefore decided to remain where we were till midnight, and start with the force above-named. We secured the services of an efficient guide, and also of a pilot, without whose skill it would be useless to attempt to take a steamer amongst the snags of the Waihou River. Having completed our arrangements, we waited for the appointed hour, 12 midnight of Sunday, 31st ult. A short time prior to that hour it was discovered that the secret expedition was known all over the place, and that a young fellow named Witika, a Ngatihako, had left post-haste to give the alarm to the Ngatihako; that our guide was nowhere to be found, and that our pilot refused to go with us on finding out the dangerous service on which we wished him to take us. It being now hopeless to surprise the Ngatihako, it was decided to start at 9 o'clock the following morning. At about that time, having received intelligence which bore every appearance of authenticity, I wrote a memorandum as follows:—

"Memorandum.—Mr. Thompson: As it is impossible now to arrest Pakara te Paora and Epiha Taha in the manner suggested by the Hon. the Native Minister, the Natives having by some means or other become aware of the fact that steps are about to be taken, I think it would be unwise, and would assuredly result in disaster, were our armed force to proceed to the Waihou. It is more than likely that the Ngatihako are by this time strongly reinforced; and, from what I know of their character, I am confident that any attempt at arrest would be resisted to the death. In fact, since the departure of the Hon. the Native Minister the position has entirely changed. There was a fair chance yesterday of effecting a surprise, but that is now impossible. Any plan, to result in success now, should be well matured, and carried out by a sufficient body of trained men.—E. W. P., Native Agent.—1st September, 1879."

Upon his receipt of the above, we had a consultation, when it was decided to abandon the enterprise and proceed to the Thames and see the Hon. Mr. Sheehan, or communicate with him by telegraph, expecting him to be at that time in Auckland. On our way down in the steamer I wrote the following memorandum, intending to have sent the same as soon as we arrived at Shortland:—

"1st September, 1879.—Memorandum for Hon. John Sheehan.—Mr. Thompson will have informed you of the peculiar circumstances which led to the abandonment of the attempted arrest of Pakara and Epiha last night and to-day. The Ngatihako, from what I hear, had a reinforcement concealed in the bush at the very time I and my party were demanding that the would-be murderers be given up to justice. It appears, also, that they had scouts stationed at places along the river-bank,