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Evening Meeting.

Monday, March 17th, 1862.

W. STIRLING LACON, Esq., Member of Council, in the Chair.

THE WAR IN NEW ZEALAND.

By CAPTAIN PASLEY, R.E.

PART I.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have great pleasure in introducing Captain Pasley of the Royal Engineers, who is about to read a paper upon the War in New Zealand. Captain Pasley served in New Zealand during the war, and was wounded in one of the actions.

CAPTAIN PASLEY: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—In order to make the remarks which I have to offer upon the war which has recently taken place in New Zealand intelligible to those amongst you who are not well acquainted with that colony, it will be necessary to give in as few words as possible a sketch of the previous history of the country.

New Zealand consists of two large and a number of smaller islands. The northern island, which contains nearly the whole of the aboriginal or Maori race, is considerably larger than Ireland. The other large island is about the size of England and Wales. The first European navigator who as far as we are aware ever visited New Zealand, was Tasman, who touched there in 1642. Captain Cook, who visited the islands in 1769, left behind him a permanent record of his presence, in the shape of pigs and potatoes, then for the first time introduced into the country. These gifts were of the greatest value to the people of a country in which indigenous animals and edible vegetables were very scarce. For many years subsequently to Captain Cook's voyage no attention was paid to the islands, but towards the close of the last century New Zealand began to attract notice in England, America, and Australia, as a favourable station for whaling. A large number of vessels was sent from those countries to cruise about New Zealand in search of whales, and depôts of stores and provisions were established on the coast, the most important of which was Kororareka, in the Bay of Islands.

The natives gladly welcomed these settlers, who in the course of trade supplied them with many things, the value of which they readily learnt to appreciate. In all their dealings they showed an aptitude for improvement and civilisation which has been rarely observed among savage tribes. They cared nothing for coloured beads and trinkets, but iron in every shape found a ready sale amongst them. Blankets and tobacco were also great articles of trade, and soon became almost necessities of life to them. Constant intercourse with Europeans soon created in the minds of the

more enterprising of the Maories a desire to see foreign countries, and in 1820, Hongi, the principal Chief of the Ngapuhi tribe, made a voyage to England, where he was received with much honour, and introduced to King George IV. Up to this period the Maories had been entirely unprovided with fire-arms, but Hongi, on his return to New Zealand, procured 300 muskets, with which, having armed a portion of his followers, he commenced a career of war and conquest which spread desolation over the country for several years. His contact with civilisation in England does not appear to have done much towards refining his tastes, for, not content with slaughtering his enemies, he cooked and ate as many of them as he could. Traditions differ very much with regard to the origin of cannibalism in New Zealand, but it is supposed to have been first practised as an act of vengeance. There does not seem to be any reason to suppose that the Maories ever devoured human flesh merely for the purpose of satisfying their hunger. The practice was always connected in their minds with the idea of insult, triumph, or revenge. No Maori could offer a more deadly affront to another than to tell him that his father had been eaten. After every battle the prisoners were triumphantly devoured. Thus, war promoted cannibalism, and cannibalism promoted war.

The first result of Hongi's wars was a great demand among the Maories for fire-arms, the possession of which had become essential to the safety of each tribe. This demand gave a great stimulus to trade, and consequently to agriculture and other industrial pursuits. From this again arose a desire and demand for other European manufactures, such as clothing, cooking utensils, and agricultural implements. Notwithstanding these advances towards civilisation, petty wars and feuds raged for many years more violently than ever among the various tribes, to whom the possession of new and more formidable means of destruction appeared to have imparted a fresh desire for blood.

In the meantime the European settlers at various points on the sea-coast had been rapidly increasing in numbers. In 1838 the population of Kororareka amounted to not less than 1,000 souls, chiefly whalers, sealers, runaway sailors, and escaped convicts. These persons were under no recognised or lawful government whatever. The native chiefs did not wish or attempt to exercise any control over them, and no civilised power had as yet claimed any sovereignty over the island. The state of anarchy and lawlessness into which the settlement consequently fell soon became intolerable to the inhabitants themselves, who attempted to put a check upon it by the establishment of an institution somewhat similar to the famous Vigilance Committees of the United States.

In 1839 immigrants of a different character began to arrive, under the auspices of the New Zealand Company, by whom systematic colonization on a great scale was attempted.

Colonel Wakefield, the leader of the expedition, purchased an immense territory from the natives, on payment of goods valued at about 9,000*l*. It appears very doubtful, however, whether the natives understood the real nature of the bargain they were making, or that they ever intended to part with the fee-simple of the land. It had been an immemorial custom among them for tribes, families, or individuals, to make over land to others for temporary purposes, but the right of resumption was always

reserved, and they probably had no idea of the real nature of the claim which the agent of the New Zealand Company was endeavouring to establish upon them. The formation of the New Zealand Company's settlement at Port Nicholson, together with the scandal caused by the lawlessness of the people of Kororareka and other whaling stations, at length compelled the British Government very reluctantly to interfere, and in 1840 Captain Hobson was sent to the Bay of Islands, as first Governor of New Zealand.

In the same year the well-known treaty of Waitangi, by which the great majority of the Maori chiefs ceded to Her Majesty the sovereignty of the islands, was concluded. One of Governor Hobson's first acts was the issue of a proclamation declaring that all future purchases of land from the natives, without the intervention of the Crown, should be illegal, and that the validity of all purchases already effected should be investigated, and Crown grants issued for such as might be proved to have been obtained for fair consideration.

The result of the investigation was that the great majority of Colonel Wakefield's purchases were annulled.

In the mean time a revolution of another kind had been going on in the country. The first missionaries of the Church of England arrived in the country in 1814, under a promise of protection from the great chief Hongi, a promise which, although not himself a convert, he faithfully kept.

They were followed by Wesleyan missionaries in 1822, and by Roman Catholics in 1838. The result of their labours has been very remarkable. I believe that at the present day at least three-fourths of the Maori race are baptized Christians, and professing members of one or other of these three denominations, and the great majority of the remainder can scarcely be called heathens, as, although not baptized, most of them attend church and school. Slavery and cannibalism have disappeared from the land as Christianity has taken root among the people. The eminently practical character of the native mind, which was evinced in the first instance by their preference for iron over the baubles which generally charm savages, had indirectly an important influence on the promotion of Christianity. The missionaries established not only churches, but schools, where children and adults were taught to read and write in their native tongue. The Maories at once appreciated the immense value of the art of writing, and were thus induced in large numbers to attend the schools, where they were also instructed in the truths of religion. They were thus gradually converted to Christianity, and, as far as it is possible to judge from outward appearances, they seem to be quite as good Christians as the average of Europeans.

It was estimated a few years ago that one-half of the native population of New Zealand belonged to the Church of England, one-fourth to the Wesleyan and Roman Catholic communions, and one-fourth unbaptized, although not necessarily or generally heathens.

At the period of the establishment of the British Government in New Zealand the northern tribes carried on a considerable trade, not only with the settlers of Kororareka, but with the Australian colonies, in which there was a great demand for Hokianga timber. Between 1840 and 1844 the prosperity and wealth of these tribes were greatly diminished owing to various causes, of which the most important were the cessation of the

demand for timber in Australia, the removal of the seat of government from Kororareka to Auckland, and the establishment of customs duties, which interfered with the irregular but profitable trade previously carried on.

A strong dislike to the British Government consequently sprang up in the minds of many of the natives.

Heke, a Ngapuhi chief, who owing to his marriage with the daughter of Hongi had become one of the most influential men in his tribe, took advantage of this feeling, and persuaded a large number of the people that their losses were owing to British supremacy alone. As a practical illustration of this opinion, he and his followers cut down and burnt the flag-staff at Kororareka. He was soon afterwards persuaded to offer an apology to the Government, and the flag-staff was re-erected, but again destroyed by Heke, who apparently attached some mysterious importance to that symbol of sovereignty. A new flag-staff sheathed with iron was then put up and placed under the protection of a detachment of troops. A small body of seamen, with a gun from H. M. ship "Hazard," were also stationed near it.

In March 1845 Heke attacked the town, of which he obtained possession after a skirmish, which resulted in the embarkation of all the inhabitants and the destruction of the town by fire.

Nothing like a savage or bloodthirsty disposition was evinced by the Maories on this occasion. On the contrary they restored uninjured to their parents a number of children who had been left behind in the hurry of the flight.

Reinforcements having arrived from Sydney, a force was despatched from Auckland to the Bay of Islands on the 8rd of April under the command of Colonel Hulme. It was ascertained that Heke had established himself at a pa called Okaihau, 18 miles inland. The British force consisted of about 400 men, and was joined by an equal number of native allies under Waka Nene another Ngapuhi chief, who has always to this day proved himself a firm friend of the colonists. The expedition carried a few rockets but no guns. The weather being exceedingly unfavourable, and the troops having to carry their own provisions as well as ammunition, four days were consumed in making their way to the pa.

So little was known at that period of the character of these peculiar works of defence, that Colonel Hulme contemplated taking the pa by assault without having previously effected a breach, but he wisely allowed himself to be dissuaded from making the attempt by Waka Nene, who urged him not to sacrifice his men in a mad and impossible enterprise.

The Maories, emboldened by the hesitation of the attack, made a sortie, but were at once repulsed at the point of the bayonet by the 58th Regiment and the Marines. Colonel Hulme, seeing clearly that without artillery he had no chance of success, marched back to the coast and re-embarked his troops, having lost during the operations 14 killed and 39 wounded.

Experience having now shown that the employment of artillery was necessary for the reduction of a strong pa, a second expedition was fitted out for the attack of a new pa which Heke had built at Ohcawai, 7 miles inland from Waimate. The force consisted of 630 troops, seamen, &c., with 6 guns, under the command of Colonel Despard, and 250 Maori

allies. The garrison of the pa was estimated at 250 men. The expedition arrived at Ohcawai on the evening of the 23rd June, and on the following morning the guns commenced firing on the pa without result. Afterwards a thirty-two pounder was brought up, the fire of which produced so much effect upon the stockade, as to induce Colonel Despard (in opposition to the opinion of Captain Marlow, R.E., who did not consider the breach practicable) to risk an assault. A storming party was therefore told off, consisting of 200 soldiers, seamen, and volunteers, with hatchets, ropes, and ladders. The attempt was most gallantly made, but in a few minutes the troops were compelled to retire, leaving one-half their number killed or wounded at the foot of the stockade.

The enemy, safely esconced in their rifle pits, watched with mingled feelings of admiration and compassion the steady advance of the storming party to certain destruction, whilst our native allies made no secret of the indignation they felt at the useless sacrifice of the lives of so many brave men.

For several days subsequently, no movement took place on either side. On the 9th of July, fire was again opened on the pa, which on the 11th was discovered to have been abandoned by the enemy. On the 14th the troops returned to Waimate.

Both parties claimed the victory, and both with some appearance of reason. The troops claimed it on the ground that they had compelled the enemy to evacuate a strong position. The Maories claimed it, because, being opposed to a number far greater than their own, they had lost but few men, and killed and wounded a great number of their opponents. Such a result in their eyes constitutes a victory, and when we consider the rapidity and facility with which they are able to erect their pas, and the abundance of strong and commanding positions throughout their country, which makes the loss of a pa of very trifling importance to them, it must be acknowledged that they had the best of the argument.

An expedition on a larger scale was dispatched a few months afterwards against Ruapekapeka, a larger and stronger pa than either of those which had been previously attacked.

It was situated about sixteen miles inland from Kororareka, and contained a garrison of about 500 men under Kawiti, a friend and ally of Heke. The expedition consisted of 1,110 Europeans (including 280 officers and men of the navy) and 450 natives, with three 32-pounders, one 18-pounder, a few field guns, and some rockets. They arrived in front of the pa on the 31st of December. On the 2nd of January, 1846, the enemy made a sortie, which was repulsed by the friendly natives. On the 10th of January the guns, having been placed in position, opened fire. They fired all day on the pa, and succeeded in making two small breaches in the outer stockade. The following day being Sunday, the enemy, expecting a suspension of hostilities on that day, retired to the rear of the pa to cook their food and to carry on their devotions. Some of the friendly natives having crept up to the stockade and ascertained that it was deserted, beckoned to the troops to advance. A party of the 58th and some sailors at once entered the pa and established themselves there. The enemy, as soon as they became aware of the unexpected entrance of the troops into the pa, made gallant and repeated attempts to dislodge

them, but in vain. Reinforcements poured in and the Maories were compelled to retreat.*

The natives were now beginning to get tired of the war, which materially interfered with their comforts by stopping their supplies of tobacco, blankets, and other articles, to which they had become so much accustomed as to be hardly able to dispense with them.

Heke's predictions of the renewed prosperity which was to be the result of the war were so far from being fulfilled, that the poverty and misery of the natives increased every day.

Heke and Kawiti consequently soon found themselves almost without followers, and were compelled to sue for peace, which they readily obtained, with a full amnesty from the Governor.

In the same year hostilities broke out at Wellington (Port Nicholson). After several skirmishes, in which the natives were generally the assailants, they were forced by starvation to retire from the district. They removed to Wanganui, and succeeded in the following year in exciting the natives of that district to make war against the Europeans.

On the 19th May, 1847, about 600 Maories attacked the town of Wanganui, where 170 soldiers were stationed in small stockades. A heavy fire was kept up on both sides during the day. In the night the enemy plundered the town and departed. Hostilities were carried on during two months with varying fortune, and on the 23rd July the enemy sent a flag of truce and announced that they were now for peace, "being satisfied with the number of soldiers slain."

The effect produced upon the minds of the Maories by these hostilities was highly gratifying to their self-love. They were, it is true, profoundly impressed by the magnitude of the resources of England, as evinced by the constant stream of reinforcements which poured into the country, owing to which the available number of troops was, notwithstanding their losses, continually on the increase, and they felt the hopelessness of final victory in a contest with a power which became stronger after every disaster. Nevertheless, the ill-success which had attended most of the military operations led them to think themselves very superior to the troops, both in military skill and in personal prowess.

They acknowledged, indeed, that the superior arms and discipline of the troops rendered them very formidable in the open country; but they were in the habit of boasting, that, whenever war might break out again, they would draw the soldiers into the forest, where they would be able to do what they liked with them. Such being their opinion, it is not surprising that many of their young men should have been eager to take advantage of any opportunity of enjoying the excitement and gaining the honour which they confidently expected to follow a collision with the troops.

Although the peace was not actually again broken between the two

* The labour and hardships endured by the troops in advancing and retreating even a very few miles through the forest were excessive, and the cheerfulness, patience, and fortitude with which they were borne, beyond all praise. Had the enemy been somewhat more numerous, and as energetic as the present generation of Maories have proved themselves to be, these expeditions would, in all probability, have shared the fate of that of General Braddock in North America. Perhaps their unmolested retreat may have been due to the presence of the native allies, who, although they did not over-exert themselves either in working or fighting, were invaluable as guides and scouts.

races until the year 1860, signs of coming discord were visible as far back as 1854, in which year some of the chiefs of the Waikato tribe, the most powerful and warlike in the country, alarmed at the increasing numbers and power of the colonists, conceived the project of setting up a king of their own; their principal object being to put a check upon colonization, by preventing the further alienation of land. The history of this movement and its connection with the war which has recently taken place at Taranaki are clearly and succinctly described in the following extract from a memorandum drawn up by the minister for native affairs at Auckland, in April, 1860.

That the present crisis in the affairs of New Zealand may be properly understood, it is in the first place requisite to give some account of the views and intentions of the native agitators known in the colony as the Maori or Waikato King party. The contest in Taranaki between the British Government and the chief Wiremu Kingi and his followers derives all its importance from its connection with this movement, for without the sympathy and expected support of the Waikato league the Taranaki natives would never have ventured upon armed resistance to the British Government.

The first proposal for the erection of a separate native state under the Waikato chief Te Whero Whero (now generally called Potatau) seems to have been made as far back as 1854. There was at first considerable diversity of opinion amongst the promoters of the movement, and great consequent uncertainty as to its precise objects. Many well-disposed natives seem to have joined in it without any thought of disaffection towards the British Government, and purely, or principally, with a view to establish some more powerful control over the disorders of their race than the Colonial Government has found it possible to attempt. But there are others whose objects have been, from the beginning, less loyal. These men have viewed with extreme jealousy the extension of the settled territory and the increase of the European population. Various influences have combined to augment the effect on their minds of this natural feeling. The lower class of settlers, sometimes wantonly, sometimes under provocation, have held out threats of a coming time when the whole race will be reduced to a servile condition. Of late, a degraded portion of the newspaper press has teemed with menaces of this kind, and with scurrilous abuse of the natives, and all who take an interest in their welfare. False notions respecting the purposes of the British authorities have been industriously spread by Europeans inimical to the Government, and whose traitorous counsels enable them to maintain a lucrative influence over their credulous native clients; and there may have been some few honest friends of the Maories, who, looking only to the better side of the agitation, have given countenance to a movement which, in their opinion, promised to promote the establishment of law and order, and the advance of civilization, and to afford a beneficial stimulus to the languishing energy of the Maori people.

The Government at one time entertained a hope—a hope now deferred, but not abandoned—that the good elements in the King movement might gain the ascendancy, and become the means of raising the native population in the social scale. It must, however, be admitted that the agitation has of late assumed a most dangerous phase.

The two objects of the league may now be affirmed to be, first, the subversion of the Queen's sovereignty over the northern island of New Zealand, and, secondly, the prohibition of all further alienation of territory to the Crown.

As regards the first object, the more advanced partisans of the Maori king now distinctly declare that the Queen of England may, for aught they know, be a great sovereign in her own country, but that here, in New Zealand, she shall become subordinate to their native monarch, from whom the British Governor shall take his instructions. The utmost conceded to the Queen is an equal standing with King Potatau.

The absolute prohibition of further land sales is a necessary part of the new policy; for it is plainly seen that, unless the further colonisation of the country can be put a stop to, the Europeans will shortly outnumber the natives even in the northern provinces.

The general sentiment of the New Zealanders with respect to their territorial possessions entirely harmonises with the views of the king-makers. The Maori feels keenly the parting with his rights over the lands of his ancestors. The expressive words of the deeds of cession declare that under the bright sun of the day of sale he has wept over and bidden adieu to the territory which he cedes to the Queen. It is in vain to

assure him that the land remains open to him upon the same terms as to the European settler. He cannot see the matter in this light. The soil, with all its memories and the dignity conferred by its possession, have passed over to the stranger; and in its place he has acquired only perishable goods, or money which is speedily dissipated. The land-holding policy of the King party is popular, because it secures to every native the occupation, in savage independence, of extensive tracts of wild land.

When the first emigrant ships arrived at Port Nicholson, and landed their hundreds of colonists, the natives are said to have wept at the sight. They had been told, but had not believed, that the foreigners were coming to settle in great numbers upon the land which the agent of the colonising Company had just acquired. They had not realised to themselves that their country was about to be occupied by a civilised race in such force as to be able to hold its ground in spite of native resistance. The New Zealanders had always been fond of having amongst them a few Europeans dependent on their goodwill, but they love to remain masters. It is the notion of the King party that the settlers in New Zealand should be placed much on the same footing as the European squatter in a native village, whose knowledge and mechanical skill procure for him a certain amount of respect and influence, but whose homestead is held on sufferance, and who is obliged to comport himself accordingly. "Send away the Governor and the soldiers," they say, "and we will take care of the Pakehas."

The old chief, Te Whero Whero, who has been a firm ally of the British Government, has been removed by his relatives of the new faction from his late residence at Mangere near Auckland to a place called Ngaruawahia, at the confluence of the Waikato with its principal feeder the Waipa. There his supporters have established the old man (who seems to lend himself unwillingly to the farce) in a kind of regal state. The deputation despatched from Taranaki to solicit support for W. King were clothed for the occasion in a uniform dress. They approached in military order. At a given signal all fell on their knees, whilst some one in a loud voice recited the text "Love the Brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King!" After the interview the deputation retired, facing towards the royal presence. They appear to have been well drilled in this ceremonial.

The absurdity of these pretensions does not render them less dangerous. Unfortunately they are supported in the minds of the natives by an overweening opinion of their own warlike skill and resources. It must be confessed that the imperfect success of military operations in New Zealand has given some countenance to the natives' fixed opinion of their own superiority. In the debates of the Maori council at Ngaruawahia, the experience of the wars against Heki and Rangihaeata, and of the Wanganui war, are constantly referred to as showing how little is to be feared from the prowess and the boasted warlike appliances of the Pakeha.

As regards the further alienation of territory, the received interpretation of the treaty of Waitangi recognises rights in the native proprietor which must be respected, however inconvenient those rights may prove; but it would not be politic, or safe, or right, to submit to the attempted usurpation of a power of obstructing the settlement of the country which the admitted interpretation will not warrant. The treaty secures to the native proprietor the right to part with to the Crown, or to retain for himself, lands which are his own. The King party would assert a national property in or sovereign right over the remaining native territory, and are ready to support all opposition to land sales, without nice inquiry respecting, and even without reference to, the merits of each particular case. In this they infringe at once upon the rights of the Crown and of the native proprietor.

It is by no means meant to assert that all who have joined or who favour the party of the Maori King propose to themselves ends so dangerous and unjustifiable. Potatau himself is probably sincerely averse to any proceedings hostile to the Government. It is, however, uncertain how far he may have power to restrain his people, and it is undeniable that sentiments quite as strong as those above described are freely expressed throughout the districts south of Auckland, and may be expected to shape the action of a large part of the powerful tribes of Waikato.

Such then is the party to whom William King of Waitara is looking for support, and, it is to be feared, with some prospect of success; and it now becomes necessary to give some explanation of the origin of the present disturbances at Taranaki.

The settlement of New Plymouth was founded in 1841 by the Plymouth Company of New Zealand, which subsequently merged in the New Zealand Company. There were at that time scarcely any natives in the district. Some had fled southward to Cook's Straits, to avoid the invading Waikatos. Many others, who had been captured on the

storming of the Ngatiawa stronghold Pukerangiora, still remained slaves in the Waikato country. The New Zealand Company's agent had purchased of the resident natives, with the assent of some of their relatives at Port Nicholson and Queen Charlotte's Sound, a tract of country extending from the Sugar Loaf Islands to a place called Taniwa, between three and four miles north of the Waitara River. The block extended about fifteen miles along the coast, and contained 60,000 acres. It included the land now the subject of dispute. After the arrival of the settlers, the refugee Ngatiawas and manumitted slaves from Waikato began to return in great numbers, and disputed possession of the block with the settlers. So completely, however, was the Waikato right of conquest admitted, that their permission was sought and obtained by the returning Ngatiawas before they ventured to set foot in the district. The Waikato had, however, previously transferred their rights to the British Government by the deed of cession which will be presently referred to.

In 1844 the Land Claims Commissioner, Mr. Spain, investigated the New Zealand Company's title, and reported in favour of their purchase; but Governor Fitzroy took a different view of the rights of the absent and enslaved Ngatiawa, and refused to confirm Mr. Spain's award.

In consideration of an additional payment, the returned natives consented to surrender a small block of 3,500 acres, comprising the town site; and within these narrow limits the British settlement was for some time confined. Other small blocks were subsequently from time to time acquired, and the settlement now extends for a distance along the coast of about five miles in each direction, north and south, from the town. The European population amounts to upwards of 2,500 souls, greatly outnumbering the resident natives.

The northern boundary of the settlement is little more than four miles from Waitara; but on this side of the town the Crown lands are intermixed with territory over which the native title has not been extinguished. A singular spectacle is here presented of peaceful English homesteads alternating with fortified pas, which command the road to the town at many points, unpleasantly reminding the spectator that the savage law of might still rules in this fair district.

It need scarcely be said that the occupants of these pas do not regard themselves, and practically are not, amenable to British jurisdiction. Since 1854 they have been in continual feud amongst themselves, and there has been a succession of battles and of murders in close proximity to the settled territory. A chief has been slaughtered on the Bell block; skirmishing natives have sought cover behind the hedgerows, and balls fired in an encounter have struck the roof of a settler's house.

These feuds have arisen out of disputes as to the title of land. One native faction has been steadfastly opposed to the alienation of territory to the Crown; the other party has been not less passionately determined to sell, and the contest has been as to their right to do so. The sellers naturally carry with them the sympathy of the colonists, who feel that an extension of the settlement would bring, not simply a material prosperity which this unfortunate place has never known, but also the far greater blessings of peace, security, and the prevalence of British law.

It is obvious that in such a state of things the relations of the two races thus closely intermixed must be full of peril. The embarrassment to the Government is extreme. But without some knowledge of the native character its extent will not be fully apprehended. When a native has offered to cede land to the Crown, his pride (perhaps the strongest passion of a chief) is committed to carry the sale into effect against all opposition, and it may be equally dangerous to the peace of the country to accept or refuse the offer. If the offer be accepted, the Government becomes involved in difficulties with the opposing party; if refused, the seller will seek to revenge himself upon his opponent, or become disaffected towards the Government that has put a slight upon him. If his passion does not turn in either of these directions, he will probably persevere in his attempts to induce the Governor to purchase; thus keeping open a source of agitation and peril. Taranaki is by no means the sole seat of such difficulties. At the present juncture in the affairs of the colony the Government is in other quarters placed in a similar dilemma, and is in the greatest danger of alienating those chiefs who are friendly by the rigid scrutiny to which it is requisite to subject their offers of land. The truest policy would be a fearless administration of justice between the contending parties. Unfortunately to determine absolutely what is just is often impossible in these cases, and were this otherwise the British Government is not in a position to enforce its award.

In March, 1859, the present Governor visited New Plymouth, and on the 8th of that month held a public meeting of all the principal chiefs of the district, the native secretary, Mr. McLean, acting as interpreter. The proceedings had reference to the establishment of British law throughout the Taranaki district, and in the course of his address the Governor said, "he thought the Maories would be wise to sell the land they could not use themselves, as what they retained would then become more valuable than the whole had previously been. He never would consent to buy land without an undisputed title. He would not permit any one to interfere in the sale of land unless he owned part of it; on the other hand, he would buy no man's land without his consent."

Immediately after this declaration by the Governor, a Waitara native, named Teira, stepped forward, and, speaking for himself and a considerable party of natives owning land at Waitara, declared that he was desirous of ceding a block at the mouth of the river on the south bank. He minutely described the boundaries of the block, stating that the claims of himself and his party went beyond those limits, but that he purposely confined his offer to what indisputably belonged to himself and his friends. Being a man of standing, and his offer unexpected by many present, he was listened to with the greatest attention, and concluded by inquiring if the Governor would buy his land. Mr. McLean replied that the Governor accepted the offer conditionally on Teira's making out his title. Teira then advanced and laid a native mat at the Governor's feet, thereby symbolically placing his land at his Excellency's disposal. Teira's right was denied by none except a native named Paora, who informed the Governor that Teira could not sell without the consent of Weteriki and himself. Teira replied that Weteriki was dying (he is since dead), and that Paora was bound by the act of his relative, Hemi, who concurred in the sale. William King then rose, but before addressing the Governor said to his people:—"I wish only to say a few words, and then we will depart." Then, turning to the Governor, he said: "Listen, Governor! Notwithstanding Teira's offer, I will not permit the sale of Waitara to the Pakeha. Waitara is in my hands. I will not give it up; *e kore, e kore, e kore* (i.e. I will not, I will not, I will not). I have spoken;" and thereupon abruptly withdrew with his people.

William King was one of the Nagatiawa who had retired to Cook's Straits, whence he returned to Taranaki in 1848. Though a well-born chief, his land-claims are not considerable, and lie chiefly, if not wholly, to the north of Waitara. On his return to Taranaki, being still in fear of the Waikatos, he applied to Tamati Raru, Teira's father, for permission to build a pa on the south bank, which was granted. He put up his pa accordingly close to one occupied by Teira's party; but his cultivations are on the north side of the river. Rawiri Raupongo, Tamati Raru, Retimana, and the other members of Teira's party, have cultivated the block sold to the Governor; but King has been joined by a number of natives who have gathered about him since his settlement at Waitara, and these men have encroached with their cultivations upon the proper owners. This has been a source of dissension, and one reason determining the sellers to part with their land. King's particular followers, who have been enjoying the use of the land without any claim to share in the proceeds of its sale, naturally support him in his opposition.

W. King's arguments against the sale of the land are stated by the District Land Commissioner in the following terms:—

W. King avowed his determination to oppose the sale, without advancing any reason for so doing. Upon which I put a series of questions to him, which I called upon the Rev. Mr. Whiteley to witness, viz.—

Q. Does the land belong to Teira and party?

A. Yes; the land is theirs, but I will not let them sell it.

Q. Why will you oppose their selling what is their own?

A. Because I do not wish that the land should be disturbed, and, though they have floated it, I will not let it go to sea.

Q. Show me the correctness or justice of your opposition.

A. It is enough; Parris, their bellies are full with the sight of the money you have promised them, but don't give it to them. If you do, I won't let you have the land, but will take it and cultivate it myself.

This petty dispute was the proximate cause of the war. The Governor gave orders that the land purchased from Teira should be surveyed for

sale, and gave instructions to the officer commanding the troops at New Plymouth to protect the surveyors, and to proclaim martial law if he should consider it desirable to do so.

W. Kingi and his followers having forcibly interfered with the survey, Lieut.-Col. Murray made use of the discretionary power entrusted to him, and placed the district under martial law on the 22nd February, 1860. Colonel Gold arrived soon after with reinforcements, and assumed the command. The whole military force at Taranaki, however, at that period amounted to no more than 340 men. With this force Colonel Gold attacked a small pa, which W. Kingi had built within the limits of the disputed land. The pa was abandoned during the night, and destroyed on the following morning.

On the 24th March information was received that the Taranaki tribe, who inhabit the country at the base of Mount Egmont and south of New Plymouth, were about to make an attack upon the town. On the 27th they arrived at Omata, within about 4 miles of New Plymouth, where they erected two pas. On the following day a body of troops marched out by one road and militia and volunteers by another, for the purpose of bringing in some settlers who had remained at Omata, and who were supposed to be in danger. Both bodies were soon engaged, and the militia and volunteers particularly distinguished themselves, and inflicted considerable loss on the enemy. Just before dark Captain Cracroft, of H.M.S. Niger, with a part of his ship's company, made a gallant attack upon one of the pas, of which he obtained possession, almost without resistance, the enemy being taken completely by surprise. On the 29th the Taranakis retired to Warea, about 25 miles south.

In the latter end of April Colonel Gold, having received reinforcements from Auckland, marched to Warea with about 450 men, including artillery and naval brigade. The numerous deep and swampy ravines which intersect the whole face of the country, generally at right angles to the coast line, render the sea-beach itself the only practicable line of march for troops, except in the immediate neighbourhood of New Plymouth, where some of them are rendered passable by means of bridges. This peculiarity, as well as the dense masses of high fern and flax which cover the country outside of the forest, is very favourable to the Maories, who are excellent skirmishers, and know well how to take advantage of the natural features of their country. On this occasion, being either taken by surprise, or not having quite made up their minds what course they should adopt, they offered no resistance, and the troops returned to New Plymouth after destroying several pas.

In the same month a reinforcement of 500 men arrived from Australia, and an entrenched camp was established near the mouth of the river Waitara, and garrisoned by a small detachment.

In June W. Kingi built and occupied a strong pa in a commanding position, about 2,000 yards from the camp, very near the boundary of the disputed land. The communication between this pa and the forest in rear was secured by a chain of smaller pas, all of which were occupied by the enemy.

Some of W. Kingi's followers having assumed the offensive, by firing upon a reconnoitring party, it was decided that an attack should be made

upon the pa. Accordingly, on the 27th June, a force of about 350 men, under the command of Major Nelson, 40th Regiment, marched out of the camp with the intention of surrounding and capturing the pa. With this object Major Nelson divided his force into three detachments, one of which, accompanied by two 24-pounder howitzers, was to attack the pa in front, while the other two were to turn both flanks, and cut off the retreat of the enemy. Unfortunately the force employed was very much too small for the purpose. The howitzers failed to effect a breach in the pa, and the detachments, being too far apart to afford each other support, were unable to reply effectively to the close and destructive fire which was maintained by the enemy's skirmishers in the high fern. The troops were at length compelled to retreat, with the heavy loss of 30 killed and 34 wounded.

At that date the military force at Taranaki amounted to—

Troops and naval brigade	1,188
Militia and volunteers	578
	<hr/>
Total	1,761

comprising about 1,500 effectives.

Colonel Gold soon afterwards left the colony, on his promotion to the rank of Major-General. In a speech addressed to the officers of his regiment on parting he used the following words:—

I need scarcely now inform you that the reasons for my not being allowed to attack William King for a considerable period were political ones; nor need I say that I do not regret having foregone my own aggrandisement and *éclat* as a military officer in the eyes of the world, rather than risk some 2,000 women and children being barbarously murdered by a sudden nocturnal onslaught of the ferocious and bloodthirsty savages, concealed in the closely approximating bush.

I think it is only due to an officer, whose conduct was the object of persistent and unceasing depreciation on the part of the newspaper press of New Zealand and Australia, to say, that, whilst it is more than doubtful whether any effort on his part, with the very limited force at his command, could have done anything material towards reducing the Maories to submission, it is certain that for the thoughtful and provident care with which he watched over the safety of the lives and property of the settlers, he merited from them a measure of gratitude which he was far from receiving.

When the intelligence of the unfortunate attack on Puketakauere reached Melbourne, Major-General Pratt, C.B. commanding H. M. forces in Australia, determined at once to proceed to the seat of war, taking with him every available soldier. The colony of Victoria was, with the consent of its government, entirely denuded of troops, and the other Australian colonies very nearly so. These troops were despatched as rapidly as possible during the month of July to Taranaki, where the General and staff arrived on the 3rd August. The force at the seat of war at that time occupied, besides the town of New Plymouth, four detached posts, two of which were to the north and two to the south of the town. Those on the north comprised an entrenched camp on the left bank of the Waitara, one mile from its mouth and about ten from New Plymouth, and a block-house, commonly known as the Bell-block Stockade, at the village

of Hua, about four miles from the town. There was also a block-house at the mouth of the Waitara, which was garrisoned from the camp.

The posts on the south were the Omata Stockade, about four miles from New Plymouth and a little inland, and an entrenched camp on Waireka Hill, about a mile beyond Omata, and separated from that post by a deep and densely timbered ravine, which rendered a considerable force and extraordinary precautions necessary in escorting provisions and ammunition to the camp.* Within the town itself were two small but strong forts, Marsland Hill and Fort Elliott, and it was partly surrounded by a chain of small block-houses, but was unprovided with a continued enceinte of any kind; and as the forest approaches within a very short distance of it, and many deep and precipitous gullies, the sides and bottoms of which are thickly clothed with fern and scrub, extend from the bush through the line of posts into the town itself, the continued presence there of a large body of troops was indispensably necessary to guard against a night surprise, in which the town would have been burnt and the women and children in all probability murdered.

The total armed force at the disposal of the Major-General at this period amounted to a little over 2,000 rank and file, including the naval brigade and all the men borne on the muster-roll of the volunteers and militia. From these last must be deducted a large proportion necessarily employed in civil capacities, as boatmen, sailors, carters, bakers, butchers, &c. leaving about 2,000 for the whole available force. Of this number little less than one-half were stationed in the various outposts, and so large a proportion of the remainder was, as above explained, compelled to remain in the town, that only about 500 rank and file could be depended upon as available for active military operations at any distance from the town, except immediately in front of the Waitara Camp, where they might have been temporarily reinforced by a part of its garrison. It was found quite impossible to obtain accurate information as to the strength of the Maories actually in arms in the vicinity, but they were generally estimated at from 1,700 to 1,800, of whom it was supposed that about one-half, consisting of the Ngatiawas under Wiremu Kingi, and the Waikatos, had their head quarters in the Waitara district, their most advanced post being Puketakauere; while the remainder, comprising the Taranaki and Ngatiruanui tribes were engaged in an attempt to invest the Waireka camp on the south, by means of long lines of rifle-pits supported by pas. The base of operations of both these parties was the dense and almost impenetrable forest, which, spreading from the slopes of Mount Egmont, covers a great part of the province of Taranaki, and stretches all along the coast line to within a short distance of the sea-shore. For many miles north and south of New Plymouth, this great forest is only separated from the sea by a narrow belt, varying from one-and-a-half to four miles in width, of land either naturally free from timber or artificially cleared. A comparatively small portion even of this contracted space is under cultivation, the rest being generally covered with very thick fern, often from 5 to 10 feet in height, interspersed with brambles. The whole face of the country is intersected by a network of wide, deep, and often precipitous ravines, generally swampy at the bottom, and their

* See Map, Plate I.

sides covered with dense timber and tangled scrub. These ravines, most of which are not visible until their edge is reached, connected as they usually are with the forest, offer peculiar facilities for marauding parties of the enemy to prowl about at night, and lie in wait for and murder solitary European stragglers.

Under cover of the forest the two main bodies of the enemy were enabled to keep up a constant communication, and to concentrate their whole force in a few hours on any point which they might wish to attack, without giving the least warning, whilst on the other hand no movement of the troops could take place without the enemy being immediately aware of it. The real sympathies of most if not all the so-called "friendly Maories" were undoubtedly with their own race, and, as it was impossible to obtain any information of the position or intentions of the enemy so long as he remained in the forest, except through them, it is not surprising that the rebels had more perfect intelligence than the military authorities. In this respect the general found himself in a far worse position than that of the officer commanding the troops in the former war, who possessed a powerful and faithful ally in the Ngapuhi chief "Waka Nene." It was evident that the friendly Maories at Taranaki were not much to be relied upon, and it was quite certain that they were in the habit of giving information to the enemy; nevertheless, it was impossible to get rid of them. The only intelligence, imperfect and doubtful as it was, that could be obtained, came from them, and to have driven them away would have been tantamount to declaring war upon the whole native race.

Major-General Pratt on his arrival found a very difficult task before him. It was necessary at the outset to proceed with great caution. The enemy were well aware that all the reinforcements which had hitherto arrived were drawn from Australia, which was now drained of troops; and they had been led by designing persons whose interest it was to promote a war of races to believe that England was at war with France, and could send no troops from home. The traditions of Heke's war, in which the troops suffered several reverses at the hands of the Maories, and never succeeded in gaining any decisive advantage over them, led them not unnaturally to believe themselves well able to cope with and overcome an equal number of soldiers. They found an easy mode of inducing the Governor not only to withhold reinforcements from the real seat of war, but even to withdraw troops from thence, and thus to paralyse the general's operations at a critical juncture, by merely holding out vague threats of a descent upon Auckland. In the same manner, by actually and constantly menacing New Plymouth, which was full of women and children, they compelled the general to keep a large force always within the town. Thus they were enabled with the greatest ease at any time to bring into the field a much larger number of men than General Pratt was able to oppose to them. This, however, would have been of little consequence had it induced them to leave the shelter of their strongholds and to fight in the open country. This was far from being the case. They had no intention of fighting except in strong positions, judiciously chosen, and fortified with great art and ingenuity by themselves. The mere loss of one of these positions would not have been of much importance to them; but had the general, with all the little force at his command, been repulsed in an

attack upon them, consequences of the most serious kind would have ensued. Indeed it appeared more than probable that any such failure would lead to a general rising of all the wavering tribes, not against Her Majesty's supremacy alone, but against the very existence of the European community. In such an event the war would have assumed a character and proportions little understood or contemplated by those who, in complete ignorance either of the nature of military operations or of the features of the country and the character of its population, spoke of the total subjection of the Maori race as no very difficult matter.

Little is known of the interior of the northern island of New Zealand, but it is certain that its inhabitants are not the least warlike among the Maori tribes; and it is probable that the complete conquest and subjugation of the country would be a task not very inferior in magnitude or difficulty to that which the Romans had before them when they undertook the conquest of Britain.

General Pratt was of opinion that the best mode of avoiding such a disastrous complication, and of bringing the war to an end before the great mass of the tribes should be committed to it, would be to afford them a practical proof, that, although the hasty attack on Puketakauere—undertaken before his arrival—had failed, it was in his power to take their strongest pas by a systematic and irresistible mode of attack, without much difficulty or loss on his part. In order to do this it was necessary to increase the strength of his moveable column. With this view he was desirous of abandoning the Waireka camp, the occupation of which was then useless, as the Omata stockade, which could be held by 50 men, was a sufficient outpost in that direction. This step would have given him an immediate addition of about 250 men; but there were serious objections to its being at once carried into effect. The camp was actually besieged by the whole force of the southern tribes, and to have withdrawn the garrison in the face of the enemy without a battle would have been looked upon by them as a confession of defeat; whilst to have attacked their formidable line of defences with the necessary certainty of complete success would have required a larger force than he could at that time employ, without leaving the town almost defenceless, and at the mercy of the Waikatos and Ngatiawas.

The general therefore determined upon the following plan of action: first, to hasten by every means in his power the departure, which had already commenced, of the women and children to the southern island, when a considerable portion of the permanent garrison of New Plymouth would be added to his available field force; and in the meantime to employ the troops in surrounding the town with a palisade and ditch, and in making gabions for siege operations, should they be required. Next, to attack and drive the southern natives from their position at Waireka. Then, reinforced by the garrison of that post, to march to the Waitara and to attack and capture Puketakauere, and the chain of pas which connected it with the forest. Then, in the event of the enemy taking refuge in the bush and refusing to submit, he proposed to follow them up to their strongholds by the system of operations which he afterwards carried out with complete success. Lastly, he intended to follow the Taranakis and Ngatiruanuis into their own country, and to inflict a severe and well-merited chastisement upon those tribes.

The failure of a portion of this plan, and the necessary postponement for some time of the remainder, arose entirely from circumstances over which the general had no control. He proceeded to Auckland for the purpose of requesting the support and assistance of the Governor and Executive in effecting the removal of the women and children. This was promised, and steamers were despatched to New Plymouth to convey them to Nelson, in the middle island.

During the general's absence, which only lasted for a few days, the enemy adopted a most unexpected and unaccountable step, in suddenly and simultaneously abandoning their strong positions both at Puketakauere and Waireka. The Waikatos proceeded northwards to their homes, the Taranakis retired to Tataraimaka and Kaihihi, the Ngatiruanuis returned to their own country, W. Kingi and his followers fell back into the forest, and all the great works which had cost the Maories months of hard labour, fell into the hands of the troops. As the officers of the native department at Taranaki were of opinion that the Waikatos at least, if not the southern natives, would return in all probability in much larger numbers in about a month or six weeks, the general, on his return from Auckland, resolved to employ the interval in completing the preparations upon which he had previously decided, not, however, neglecting any opportunity which might offer of inflicting a blow upon the rebels who remained in the province.

An unexpected difficulty now arose in removing the women and children. The alarm which they had previously experienced, and which had induced them readily to consent to leave the province, disappeared with the main body of the enemy, and nearly all of them absolutely refused to embark. The general at length finding that it was out of his power to effect their removal without the use of actual violence, was most reluctantly compelled to abandon the attempt, and to allow about a thousand women and children to remain, thus depriving himself of the services of about half a battalion of soldiers. In the mean time, no chance of harassing the enemy was lost. All the pas, upwards of twenty in number, many of them very strong and of quite recent construction, which they had occupied outside of the forest, were destroyed, and in them large stores of provisions. Many attempts were made to surround the enemy in their pas and to prevent their escape, but these were always defeated by the accuracy of their information, their vigilance, and the rapidity with which they were able to move. It was said indeed at the time, and perhaps generally believed, that much more might have been done by a judicious use of the services of the militia and volunteers, whose knowledge of the country and of the natives would, it was thought, enable them to follow the enemy through the bush with advantage. This, however, was a mistake. Soon after the general's arrival he was waited upon by the major commanding, and all the captains of the militia and volunteers, who offered, if their men were relieved from garrison duty and from work in the trenches, to take them out in small parties every night, and lie in wait for the rebels. They undertook, in this manner, to clear the open country of their marauding parties, and to drive them into their pas in the bush. The general at once accepted this proposition, but on the following day, when the officers explained the arrangement to their companies, the men refused to carry it out. They said that they would of course go wherever they might be

ordered, but they would not volunteer for such peculiarly hazardous service, and they did not think that they ought to be called upon to perform any service on which the troops were not also employed.

Without entering into a detailed account of all the operations which were carried on under these difficulties, with more or less success, but without any disaster, during the months of August and September, it may be mentioned here, that all the accounts of disastrous failures, disgraceful retreats, and misconduct on the part of officers high in command, which, having first appeared in some of the New Zealand newspapers, were copied and adopted by the *Melbourne Argus*, and subsequently by the *Times*, were wholly without foundation, and destitute of truth. It is true, that, for the reasons before stated, nothing very brilliant or decisive could be effected during that period, but much mischief was done to the enemy, and nothing like disaster or defeat occurred.

On the 18th September the Governor addressed a letter to General Pratt, in which he recommended a system of "sudden, secret, and constant attack when and where they least expect it," and urged that advantage should be taken of our superiority of force at the time, as the proportions might be reversed in a few weeks.

Perhaps the best illustration that can be given of the difficulties of the general's position, will be to quote an extract from his reply to that letter. He says:

During the past few weeks the troops under my command have destroyed between twenty and thirty pas, many of them very recently built, and provided with rifle-pits and other defences constructed in the most careful and elaborate manner.

The rebels did not venture to defend any of these places, but deserted them all on the approach of the troops, in some cases in such haste, that, on our entry, we found meat half-cooked on their fires. We have also destroyed a great number of "wharres," or native habitations, and a considerable quantity of provisions.

During the whole of this period the enemy have been suffering very severely from sickness, caused by privation and exposure; and I have certain information that they have lost a good many men, including several of their most influential chiefs, who have been killed in action, or have died of their wounds. The whole of our casualties, on the other hand, throughout all these operations amount to only one man killed, and four wounded. I cannot conceive that such a result can be looked upon as a success on the part of the enemy.

The plan which your Excellency proposes of harassing them by secret, sudden, and constant attacks, by bodies of troops without baggage, is, in my opinion, impracticable. It is impossible to surprise them, as the scouts, who are constantly on the watch about their pas, will always give them sufficient notice to enable them to effect their escape should they be desirous of doing so, or to prepare for defence if they mean to remain. Experience has proved that to send troops unprovided with artillery to attack a pa entails certain failure, accompanied with an useless loss of men and of prestige. I consider it of the highest importance, not only to the successful termination of the present war, but to the future peace of the colony, that the Maories should become convinced of the superiority of the troops in warfare, and of the hopelessness of their endeavouring to gain any material advantage over us; and I cannot think that it would be wise or justifiable knowingly to place the troops in a position in which that superiority would disappear, or perhaps be converted into inferiority.

I arrive at a different conclusion from the opinion expressed by your Excellency, that the present excess of our numbers over those of the enemy in this province places us in a more favourable position for the prosecution of the war than we shall probably be in two or three months hence, when the proportion may be reversed. On the contrary, the principal difficulties with which I have now to contend arise from this very cause; and I am satisfied that any increase in their numbers, which might give them sufficient confidence either to defend a pa in an accessible position, or to accept battle in the open

country, would lead to a much more satisfactory result than a lengthened continuance of the present state of affairs.

The justice of these opinions was signally verified by the event.

In the beginning of October the general received intelligence that the Taranaki tribe had built a couple of new pas on the river Kai'ihii, about sixteen miles from New Plymouth. He determined to attack them. There were evident signs reported by a reconnoitring party that the natives intended to defend them, inasmuch as they had covered them with fascines of green flax. He looked upon this as a favourable opportunity for making a serious attack upon them. He left New Plymouth on the 9th of October with 800 men, and the following artillery, viz., one 8-inch gun, two 24-pounder howitzers, two cohorn mortars, and some rockets. To give an idea of the difficulty of moving in that country, I may mention, that the 8-inch gun, which was slung on a devil carriage, required eighteen bullocks to draw it. It was attended by six carts carrying the platform, carriage, ammunition, &c., requiring in all nearly sixty bullocks for one gun. The train of carriages for the whole column, comprising only 800 rank and file, was considerably more than a mile in length, although nothing unnecessary was carried. That night the force encamped at Tataraimaka, and on the following morning reached their destination.

The enemy's defences consisted of three pas, two on the north, and the third on the south side of the river Kaihii. Their flanks were well covered by deep and impassable ravines, and the only way by which the pas could be approached was flanked by a line of rifle-pits on the margin of a patch of dense forest. The pas were sufficiently near for mutual support, and were well provided with flank defence.*

The nature of the ground made it necessary first to attack Orongo-maihangai, the strongest of the three.

On the morning of the 11th, a working party and guard of the trenches advanced to within 250 yards of the pa, and commenced the construction of a parallel. The enemy showed themselves during this operation, but did not for some time open fire. They appear to have misunderstood the nature and object of the work, and to have been in momentary expectation of an assault.

It was not until the breastwork was nearly completed, and the guns brought up, that they became aware of their mistake. They then opened a sharp fire from the pa and from the rifle-pits. The guns and mortars commenced shelling the pa before noon, and kept up their fire till dark, without making a breach in the stockade.

In the course of the night approaches by sap were commenced and carried on till morning, when it was discovered that the enemy had abandoned all their pas during the night.

It appears that, although the shells passed through the stockade without doing it any material damage, they searched the rifle-pits, and must have inflicted considerable loss on the enemy.

General Pratt's intention was to follow up this success by a march further to the south, with the view of attacking other pas belonging to the same tribe, but he was reluctantly compelled to abandon this intention, by the receipt of a letter from the Governor, informing him that a strong force of Waikatos was already on the march for the Waitara.

* See Plates II. and III.

Considering the nature of the country, the total absence of roads, and the impossibility of securing a communication with the town by sea, owing to the exposed and rocky formation of the coast, it could not be anticipated that any operations of importance further south could be concluded in a less time than several weeks, and in the face of the Governor's warning it would have been extremely imprudent to have attempted any thing of the kind at that time. A few days afterwards it was ascertained that the Waikatos had actually arrived at W. Kingi's pa, whence they sent a challenge to Mr. Parris, the land purchase commissioner, of which the following is a translation:

To Mr. PARRIS,

Puke Kohe, 1 Novr. 1860.

Friend, I have heard your word—come to fight me, that is very good; come inland, and let us meet each other. Fish fight at sea; come inland, and stand on our feet; make haste, make haste, don't prolong it. That is all I have to say to you—make haste.

From WETINI TAIPORUTU.

From POROKOME.

From all the Chiefs of NGATIHAUA and WAIKATO.

On the evening of the 5th of November intelligence was received that the Waikatos had taken possession of Mahoetahi, an old pa in a strong position on the road from New Plymouth to the Waitara. Major-General Pratt immediately wrote to Colonel Mould, R.E., who was then in command at the Waitara camp, to inform him that he intended to attack the enemy early on the following morning, and to desire that he would make a simultaneous attack on the other side, with a portion of his force.

In pursuance of this plan, the general marched from New Plymouth with 700 men at daybreak on the 6th, and immediately on his arrival at Mahoetahi commenced the attack, without waiting for the detachment from the Waitara, which had been accidentally delayed, but which arrived in time to take part in the engagement before its close.

The Maories made a gallant but ineffectual defence, and were pursued for several miles, until they took refuge in the forest. The loss of the troops and militia on this occasion amounted to 4 killed and 15 wounded; of the natives 31 were found dead on the field and 5 wounded, and traces of blood were seen all along their line of retreat, proving that many of those who succeeded in reaching the bush must have been wounded.

The officers of the native department, who had means of obtaining intelligence on the subject, estimated their loss at about 100.

The Governor, on learning the result of this action, was of opinion that the Waikatos would very probably leave Taranaki and turn their whole force upon Auckland. Under this impression he called upon General Pratt to detach no less than 400 rank and file from his already small force to assist in the defence of the capital. The contemplated movement of the Waikatos did not take place, and the only result of the transfer of these troops to Auckland was entirely to cripple the general's operations, and effectually to prevent him from taking any immediate advantage of his success. About the end of the month, a portion of the 14th Regiment having arrived in Auckland, the troops that had been detached from Taranaki were sent back again, and the general determined to carry out the system of attack upon the enemy's positions in the bush which he had contemplated from the first; but, during the month

of December the weather was so bad that nothing could be done, the country being flooded with rain.

On the 27th of December the general marched from New Plymouth to the Waitara with the whole of his available force.

The enemy had in the meantime established a new pa, Matarikoriko, in a very formidable position, about two miles and a-half from the camp, and nearly surrounded by deep, precipitous, swampy ravines, fringed with concealed rifle pits, the whole of the neighbouring country being covered with fern, from six to eight and even ten feet in height, and so dense that a horse could with difficulty force his way through it.

The general determined to establish an advanced post at Kairau, about 900 yards from Matarikoriko. From this point he proposed to attack the pa by regular approaches. On the 29th he marched to Kairau with 900 men, and immediately commenced the erection of a redoubt, the working party being protected on all sides by skirmishers.*

The work proceeded without molestation until about 9 A.M. when a heavy fire was opened on the troops from the concealed rifle-pits, as well as from native skirmishers in the high fern. The work was completed about 6 P.M. and garrisoned, but the firing continued on both sides throughout the night. In the morning the enemy showed a white flag, and the day was spent in strengthening and improving the work. On the morning of the 31st it was found that the Maories had abandoned all their works in the neighbourhood, and had fallen back on the forest at Huirangi. General Pratt described their deserted position as "one of the most formidable he ever saw," and as "chosen with singular sagacity." The pa was demolished, and its site occupied by a block-house to contain 60 men.

The enemy now occupied a line of rifle-pits upwards of a mile in length, skirting the edge of the forest. These being entirely concealed from view it would have been a mere waste of ammunition to attack them by artillery fire, and they were so ingeniously arranged for mutual support that an attack by *vive force* could only have led to a useless waste of the lives of the troops. It was therefore determined to push forward the advance by a chain of redoubts to within about half a mile of the forest, and from thence to approach and pierce the centre of their position by double sap.†

The sap was commenced on the 22nd January, and on the same night, or, more correctly, on the following morning before daybreak, the enemy attacked the most advanced or No. 3 redoubt in force, and with a degree of vigour, determination, and military skill, which few persons had previously given them credit for being able to command. The attack commenced some time before dawn, and was gallantly maintained until after the break of day, when it was seen that they had advanced in regular military order, with storming party, supports, and reserve. Although the

* In a dispatch dated 31st December, General Pratt says,—“My force, after being joined by parties from the Waitara camp and other positions, amounted to 900 rank and file of all arms, which was all I could muster, after leaving the town and other posts in security, and requiring some assistance from H.M. ships ‘Cordelia’ and ‘Victoria;’ and I note this, in consequence of the great misstatements which are circulated regarding the amount of force at my disposal for aggressive operations.”

† The positions of the redoubts and the line of sap are shown in the accompanying map, Pl. I.

redoubt was well constructed, and garrisoned by a considerable portion of the 40th regiment, it was not till reinforcements had arrived from the rear that the attack was finally repulsed, and the enemy driven back into the forest.

The sap was then pushed steadily forward, small redoubts being erected at intervals along the line to protect its head, until the 27th, when the enemy, finding their line of defence almost cut in two, abandoned the whole position, and fell back about a mile and a half into the bush, where they had established a similar but still more formidable series of works of defence. A few days were then occupied by the troops in constructing a strong work (No. 6 redoubt) at Huirangi, at the edge of the forest, and in clearing a road to the front, through a part of the bush. They then pushed forward about three quarters of a mile, and constructed another redoubt (No. 7) under a heavy fire from the front and both flanks.

In front and on the right of the redoubt lay a great amphitheatre of lofty rugged hills and deep ravines, thrown together in wild and picturesque confusion.

On the left was a rocky precipice overhanging the river Waitara, of which it here formed the left bank. The brow of each hill, at a distance of from six to eight hundred yards from the redoubt, was crowned by irregular lines of rifle-pits, so arranged as to flank each other and to command every ravine which an assailant would be compelled to cross, and so well concealed by the stunted bush which grew plentifully on the hills, that their position could only be guessed at by the smoke from the musketry of their occupants.* The right of the enemy's line of defence rested on the river at Pukerangiora, a commanding eminence, long famous in the annals of Maori warfare, and now crowned by the Pa Te Arai.

Immediately in rear of the enemy's position lay the great forest, stretching far away over mountain and valley into the distant and unknown interior.

From No. 7 redoubt the approach was carried on by single sap as far as No. 8, or about a quarter of a mile; from this point the double sap was recommenced, demi-parallels being thrown out to cut through the lines of rifle-pits on the left front of the attack. The whole of these works were carried out under great difficulties, owing to the incessant fire kept up by the enemy in front and on both flanks, and their repeated night attacks upon the head of the sap; notwithstanding which the troops suffered but little loss owing to the able and careful manner in which the works were designed and carried out by Colonel Mould, Commanding Royal Engineer.

On the 12th of March, a truce was granted to the Maories at the request of W. Thompson, a very influential Waikato chief, who had been deputed by the tribe to visit Taranaki and report upon the progress of the war there. Finding that his people had suffered and were suffering heavy losses in killed and wounded, and that they were compelled day by day to fall back before the steady and irresistible advance of the sap, he became anxious that hostilities should cease. The truce, however, only lasted for three days, the Maories having refused to agree to the terms offered them by the Governor.

On the morning of the 15th, three 12-pounder Armstrong guns, and

* For the mode of construction of these pits, see Pl. IV.

two 8 and two 10-inch mortars which had just arrived from England, were moved to the front and placed in position. At 11 a.m. the enemy's white flag was lowered, and a red one hoisted, upon which firing recommenced on both sides.

On the night of the 16th, a last attempt was made to destroy the head of the sap, which was defeated by the explosion of an 8-inch shell which had been attached to the sap-roller for that purpose.

On the 18th the enemy finally sued for peace, and the war came to an end.

The Waikatos, having agreed to give up the whole of the arms and plunder they had taken, returned to their own country accompanied by Wiremu Kingi, whose immediate followers came in, and made submission.

Mr. RIDGWAY: It was stated by Mr. Buxton in the House of Commons the other night that the war was raging fiercely in New Zealand now. I should like to ask Captain Pasley whether it is in his knowledge that such is the fact?

Captain PASLEY: I do not believe there is any war in New Zealand at present. The Australian mail has just arrived, and there is nothing about it in that; on the contrary, everything appears quite quiet.

Mr. RIDGWAY: I am pretty well up in New Zealand affairs, and I beg to state that the assertions which have been made with reference to the prevalence of war in New Zealand are totally without foundation. General Pratt has accomplished the defeat of the natives. There has been no war in New Zealand since the arrival of General Cameron. If the time would permit, I would have asked some more questions.

Mr. FITZGERALD FOSTER: What is the greatest number of natives that ever met our troops during the recent war?

Captain PASLEY: It is impossible to state exactly. It is supposed that the number of natives engaged in the operations just detailed was about 2,000. It is impossible to say whether the whole of the 2,000 were actually engaged in action on any one occasion.

Mr. FOSTER: Did you ever hear it computed what number of men the natives could bring into the field at once—I do not mean in the late war, but in future?

Captain PASLEY: It would depend entirely on the union of the tribes, which is a very unlikely thing to take place. In the first place, the Ngapuhi tribe and its chiefs appear to be as firm friends of ours as ever they were, and they constitute one of the most numerous and powerful of the Maori tribes. Taking the population of the northern island south of Auckland, that is, exclusive of the Ngapuhis, it might be about 40,000 altogether, and probably one-third would be adult males.

Mr. RIDGWAY: I can state that the population of adult males in New Zealand is 30,000; including men, women, and children, 56,000. The Europeans were 70,000, and since then the augmentation of the British forces has considerably increased that number.