

thereon, and with the name of the Lady by whom she is to be presented. In order to carry out the existing regulation, that no presentation can be made at a Drawing Room excepting by a Lady actually attending that Court, it is also necessary that a letter from the Lady who is to make the presentation, stating it to be her intention to be present, should accompany the presentation card above referred to, which will be submitted to the Queen, for Her Majesty's approbation. It is Her Majesty's Command, that no Presentations shall be made at the Drawing Rooms, except in accordance with the above regulations.

It is particularly requested that in every case the names be *very distinctly written* upon the cards to be delivered to the Lord Chamberlain, in order that there may be no difficulty in announcing them to The Queen.

The state apartments will not be open for the reception of Company coming to Court, until half-past one o'clock.

War-Office, February 15, 1861.

LORD HERBERT has received a Despatch and its inclosures, of which the following are copies, addressed to the Military Secretary by Major-General Pratt, C.B.:

*Head Quarters, New Plymouth, Taranaki,
Sir, 10th November, 1860.*

REFERRING to my despatch of the 16th ultimo I have the honour to state, for the information of His Royal Highness the General Commanding-in-chief, that the Governor's letters were to the effect that the Waikato Tribes had marched in force to join William Kingi, on the 11th October, and it became necessary for me to restore the men to the Waitara Camp, which had been denuded of half its force for my expedition to the South, and also to strengthen the town and out-posts.

The reports from the Native Department were, from the peculiar character of the Maori movements, of the most fluctuating character, and varied day by day; at one time the enemy were in the immediate neighbourhood and might be expected on any day, at another they would not move before the end of November, or in December, thus rendering it impossible to form any decisive plan regarding them.

On the evening of the 5th instant, however, I received from Mr. Drummond Hay reliable information that the Waikatos had crossed the Waitara River in force, that morning, for the purpose of joining Wm. Kingi, and that they would be at Mahoetahi, about eight miles from this, that night or next morning.

I immediately arranged that a column, (strength as per margin)* should move from this, under my personal command, at 5 A.M. so as to reach Mahoetahi at 8½, and also that another column (see margin)† under Colonel Mould, R. E., should move from the Camp at the Waitara and join me at Mahoetahi at the same hour.

The intended move from New Plymouth was carried out, and the Mangoraka river crossed without opposition, and, on nearing Mahoetahi Hill, the site of a dilapidated Pah with a few palisades and wharves, which my column did a little after 8 A.M., we were met by a heavy fire

from the Waikatoes, who occupied it as well as the swamp, gullies, and fern land contiguous.

This was returned by the skirmishers of the 65th regiment posted on the road leading to the Pah. The guns were quickly brought into position, and the militia directed to take post to the left.

The ammunition and camp equipage being now mostly over the river, I ordered the Militia to seize a hill a little in advance on the left, close to the Pah and to occupy it, this being effected a portion of the 65th Regiment, under Captain Turner, were directed to fix bayonets and storm the Pah in front, the Militia being ordered to do the same on the left flank of it. This was done by both in the most gallant manner, the enemy still retaining, for a short time, hold of a portion of the Pah, and keeping up a most galling fire from the fern and swamp.

The 12th and 40th Regiments having now succeeded in bringing up the whole of the ammunition, camp equipage, &c., extended the right of the line throwing it forward, while Colonel Mould, with the column from the Waitara Camp, came into action on the left. The enemy finding himself thus hemmed in, and under a murderous cross fire, after an action that lasted two hours, turned and fled with much loss.

I pursued with a portion of the force consisting of the 12th, 40th, 65th,* and with two guns crossed the Waiongona river, and the retreat was so rapid and the rout so complete, that at two miles from the Camp several wounded prisoners were taken, and dead bodies found. The road all along was stained with blood. Then having swept round by Ngatiparirua and the Ouuku-Kaitara stockade rejoined the force at Mahoetahi, where, leaving 300 men under Colonel Mould, R. E., to occupy this position, and eventually another more desirable in its neighbourhood, the troops returned to New Plymouth after a long and arduous day's work, and a portion of the force from the Waitara rejoined the Camp.

Amongst the killed are five very important Chiefs, the first being the leading man of the Maori King movement, the four others, very influential chiefs; there were also many chiefs of minor note killed; it is not easy to obtain accurate intelligence of the numbers of the enemy who were in the field or who have been slain; but from the bodies counted on the spot, which we buried, and that were being brought in wounded from the fern where they lay concealed, I should think from 80 to 100 were killed and wounded, of this latter five were brought in as prisoners, and one unwounded man.

I never saw a more gigantic or powerful set of men than these tribes, and being armed with well finished English rifles and double barrelled fowling pieces they were able to keep up a most continuous fire, whilst their power of concealment was most marvellous, indeed when closely upon them we only knew of their whereabouts by the smoke from their guns. Many of these arms were captured by our men on the field and brought into Camp.

I trust this defeat of the enemy will have good effect, and it is a curious circumstance that an insulting challenge (which I inclose) was signed by the first named Chief, who was killed the very day after he crossed the Waitara.

Our loss was 4 killed, and 2 officers and 13 men wounded, as per casualty return.

I append the report from Colonel Mould, R. E., relative to the column under his command; re-

* Column from New Plymouth. — 5 Field-Officers, 9 Captains, 13 Subalterns, 6 Staff, 23 Serjeants, 10 Drummers, 617 Rank and File.

† Column from the Waitara. — 2 Field-Officers, 1 Captain, 8 Subalterns, 1 Staff, 10 Serjeants, 4 Drummers, 291 Rank and File.

* 2 Field-Officers, 4 Captains, 8 Subalterns, 1 Staff, 17 Serjeants, 8 Drummers, 400 Rank and File.