THATCHER’S
SONGS OF THE WAR, &c.

CAMP LIFE AT DRURY.

AIR... Cannibal Islands.

The war draws its slow length along,
And I don’t think that I’ll do wrong
If I tell you now in a song
Of the Volunteers at Drury.
These Auckland Rifles had to tramp
Out there and live in a wretched camp,
A prey to dysentery and cramp;
And lying in blankets muddy and damp;
Rising as soon as day did dawn;
Parades at five o’clock in the morn;
And all complaints regarded with scorn;—
And that’s Camp Life at Drury.

Chorus—
Taking coves for soldiers is a shame;
On me I hope they’ve got no claim,
But I’ll expose the little game
Of Camp Life out at Drury.

A youth named Dacre writes to his dad,
And tells his father it’s too bad,—
And then he gives a very sad
Account of his life at Drury.
“Oh father,” he says piteously,
“Go to Tommy Russell, and pay for me
That precious ten pound exemption fee—
I’ll do anything in the world to be free—
Or else give them leg bail I will;
The work’s enough a cove to kill,
I’m certain that I shall be ill

If I stop any longer at Drury.”

Chorus.—Taking coves for soldiers is a shame, &c.
Dear father, I know that you'll look blue
When I tell you a dirty job or two
That we poor Volunteers have to do
Now they've got us out at Drury.
To the slaughter-house we have to repair,
And bullocks are brutally murdered there;
Not pithed and killed upon the square,
But battered with pole-axes, I declare:
And, though it be the Sabbath day,
Instead of going to church to pray,
We've to carry the nasty in'nards away
From the slaughter-house at Drury.

Chorus.—Taking coves for soldiers is a shame, &c.

Oh father dear, they show us no quarter,—
After the nasty bullock slaughter
We work to our waists in mud and water,
That's how we get served at Drury.
To the creek we're marched, it's a regular sin,
And then we're ordered to fall in;
To empty a raft we have to begin,
With water and mud nearly up to the chin,
With cold we're nearly frozen dead,—
And before we tumble into bed
They give us nothing but mouldy bread,
Oh what a nice life at Drury.

Chorus.—Taking coves for soldiers is a shame, &c.

Young Dacre then goes on to say
In a graphic and most amusing way,
How they portion off the Sabbath day
To the Volunteers at Drury.
Morning Service—to the slaughter-house go,
For a sacrifice, knock down a bullock or so,—
Lay the entrails all in a row.
Afternoon Service—unto the creek go,
Wash off the traces of brains and blood,
Work up to your waist in water and mud.
Evening Service—mount guard, and chew the cud
Of life in the Camp at Drury.

Chorus.—Taking coves for soldiers is a shame, &c.
THE SURRENDER OF THE NATIVES.

Air... Courtin' in the Kitchen.

The Waikato now is ours,
   The Natives we have beaten,—
We've thrashed them, by the powers,
   And their peaches we have eaten:
It's been an arduous task,
   And now each vile offender
We sue, and humbly ask
   That they'll come and surrender.

The friendly Naylor's sent
   To propose conciliation;
To the rebels then this gent
   Makes a very strong oration.
They're affected, and they say,
   As their chances now are slender,
They'll all come in next day,
   And make a grand surrender.

This gammon we believe;
   Our men, in expectation,
Are all on the qui vive
   For the rebels' resignation;
Two hundred chiefs, they're told,
   Will come their arms to tender,—
But, crikey, how we're sold
   When they do come and surrender!!

Some seventy, I've heard say,
   In token of submission,
Give up themselves next day,
   And for peace and grub petition;
But, as true as I'm alive,
   Of the helpless feminine gender
There are over fifty-five,—
   Oh what a fine surrender!!

There are twenty worn-out men,
   Their fighting days are over,
Give up themselves, and then
   Expect to live in clover.
No rifles they have got,
    But nine rusty guns they tender,
Not a half-a-one a-piece,—
    What weapons to surrender !!

The women in canoes,
    Their comforts not o'erlooking;
Bring all the things they use—
    They've got an eye to cooking—
Calibashes, water-cans,
    And nice pigs, young and tender;
Billies and frying-pans,—
    Oh what a fine surrender !!

They've mats and kits galore,
    Camp kettles now are ringing,—
And of children, half a score,
    Utensils now are bringing;
They know we shall not snub
    The infants young and tender,—
And as we find the grub,
    It pays them to surrender.

Upon this practical joke
    No doubt themselves they're priding;
For thus each rebel bloke
    For his family is providing;
They know we'll feed them well,
    Our hearts are very tender;
But what a regular sell
    Is this feminine surrender.

Their minds now free from care,
    Their wives and kids well fed now;
For battle they'll prepare,
    And won't they go-ahead now!
They've thrust on us their ma's
    And their little kids so tender;
But you'll find out that their pas
    They won't so soon surrender.
THE WAKAMARINA.

Air............. Twig of the Shannon.

On the banks of the Wakamarina,
From Nelson some thirty-two miles,
A splendid gold-field’s been discovered,
Where dozens are making their piles;
They work on the bars of the river,
And in many a crevice, I’m told
With their knives they can pick out the nuggets,
A nice easy way to get gold.

Chorus—
I’m waiting for fresh information,
If the gold is all there you will see
I’m off to the golden location,
The Wakamarina for me.

It’s affecting the City of Nelson,
Provisions have gone up in price,
And servants and tradesmen have started
To the gold-field, all scorning advice.
Milkmen give their customers warning,
They’re leaving their usual walks,
And off to the Wakamarina
Old skyblue is walking his chalks.

Chorus.—I’m waiting for fresh information, &c.

The crews all desert from the vessels,
The skipper on board vainly grieves,
And to help to discharge the ship’s cargo
He has to turn to, in shirt sleeves.
Blacksmiths and bakers get cheeky
When they think of the new golden ground,
And the butchers are talking of raising
Pleuro to a shilling a pound.

Chorus.—I’m waiting for fresh information, &c.

The new chums start off for the diggings,
But some of them never get there,
When others arrive and look at it
One glance sinks them into despair;
No comforts they get in that quarter,
For home again, oh, how they yearn!
They can’t stomach working in water,
And they curse it, and quickly return.

Chorus.—I’m waiting for fresh information, &c.

On the road there was many a fellow
That the special reporter there twiggled,
One new chum had got an umbrella,
And in a beltopper was rigged;
And a fat cove was blown with hard walking,
He made the reporter quite grin,
For he tells us that his swag consisted
Of just a square bottle of gin.

Chorus.—I’m waiting for fresh information, &c.

A new chum, of course very silly,
And green as the foliage around,
We’re told lost the run of his billy,
On his journey to Tom Tiddler’s ground,
To find it he put down his swag there,
A trick, alas! he did deplore,
For hunting about for his billy,
Lost his swag which he saw never more.

Chorus.—I’m waiting for fresh information, &c.

This rush will soon clear out Otago,
For passengers ships advertise,
And each steamer will bring up a cargo
Of Victorian diggers, no flies,
They’re the boys that can drop on the metal,
And when from Dunedin they come,
They’ll get all the gold from the river,
And there’ll be no chance for a new chum.

Chorus.—I’m waiting for fresh information, &c.

THE MAORI PRISONERS.

Am...I hardly think I will.

I pity those poor Maoris
On board the Marion there,
They must be miserable
I really do declare;
To vary their existence
    They should have something to do,
We really should employ them,
    Now don't you think so too?

In their life there's too much sameness,
    And we must all deplore
That the monotony isn't varied
    By a little work on shore;
We're paying other people
    For what they now might do,
We're far too easy with them,
    Now don't you think so too?

We advertise for tenders
    For work here every day,
And they might do for nothing
    Those things for which we pay;
I think the City Board might
    Find labour for a few,
Come Beveridge and Macready!
    Now don't you think so too?

I see we've been importing
    Machines for breaking stones,
When we might be employing
    Those Maoris lazy bones;
We ought to give them hammers,
    And make them nap a few,
'Stead of cracking them by steam here,
    Now don't you think so too?

There's a splendid institution
    From home we ought to get,
If the Maoris took to shirking
    'T'would wake'em up I bet;
Of the everlasting staircase
    They've not yet had a view,
A treadmill here would warm'em,
    Now don't you think so too?

We show the Maoris quarter,
    But kindness is in vain,
They kill our men in battle,
    And decapitate the slain;
'Mongst our pet Maori prisoners
I fear there are a few
That hanging is too good for,
Now don’t you think so too?
Put them to stone-breaking,
I really trust they will,
And to England send an order
For a Coldbath Fields’ treadmill,
When it arrives, upon it
They ought to put a few,
Not forgetting Doctor Shortland,
Now don’t you think so too?

"OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT" AT THE SEAT OF WAR.

Parliamentary reporters,
Editors at home at ease,
Country correspondents, also
All the "Press’s" busy bees,
Hear a poor New Zealand "special"
Tell the hardships waiting for
Him who has to send despatches
Ever from the seat of war.

Where the troops go he must follow,
In a blanket-tent must live;
And the most minute description
Of engagements he must give;
If a horse he cannot purchase,
Walking though he may abhor,
He must tramp with writing tackle
To the very seat of war.

He must ever be untiring,
Seek the van without delay,—
Heedless of the Maoris firing
Not five hundred yards away;
He must not at all be daunted
By the whizzing bullets, for
With his pen, of course, he's wanted
Always at the seat of war.
When a pa the troops are rushing
He must go their charge to see,
And a vigilant eye-witness
Of the whole affair must be;
Of his being tomahawked, pr'aps,
He the idea may abhor,—
Still the "special" has to chance it
Daily at the seat of war.

Should the natives be defeated,
Going farther in the bush,
He through rivers, swamps, and thickets,
With the troops his way must push;
He must "hump" his clothes and blankets,
And his stationery for
Giving latest information
From the shifting seat of war.

And when the engagement's over,
Our poor luckless "special's" found
Hard at work, despatches writing,
On a gin-case on the ground;
Desks he knows not, stool he has none,—
He must do without them, for
Folks are dying for information
Sent down from the seat of war.

Camping out in frequent showers,
Is a thing he has to learn,—
Heedless of the rheumatism,
He must slumber on wet fern,
Living on the roughest tucker,—
Luxuries, of course, ain't for
Our own special correspondent
Writing at the seat of war.

Oh! ye chaps who write for papers!
Living there at home at ease,
Would you like to stand such hardship,
And discomforts such as these?
As the fire ye heap more coals on,
Spare a little pity for
"Our own special correspondent"
Shivering at the seat of war.
THE SCAMPERDOWN.

Air... County Down.

The Whale that’s cruised about a week,
Defying all the chaps on shore,
And blowing close in with such cheek,
Will never go spouting any more;—
At last they managed to get a crew,
And they went out and did him brown;
The harpoon skilfully they threw,
And fastened to the Scamperdown.

Those lazy chaps upon the wharf,
Who saw the monster every day,
To nail this fish would not go off;
“It’s too much trouble, sir,” said they,—
And Thatcher chaffed them in a song;
And said they scorned to earn a brown;
At last some fellows came out strong,
And went and got the Scamperdown.

A Maori whale-boat soon they got—
Harpoons and lances, all serene,—
And off they started for the spot
Where last the monster had been seen;—
“Oh! there she blows, my lads give way,
Now’s the time to win renown,—
We’ll fasten to it soon,” said they,
As they pulled now towards the Scamperdown.

All honour to this daring crew;
George Stranger proved himself all there,
And Robert Wells and Williams too,
Can pull a boat along, I swear;
They showed the lazy boatmen here
The way to go and win renown,
Not one evinced the slightest fear
In pulling to the Scamperdown.

They got close to the monster soon,
And Joseph Morier was all there,
He skilfully threw his harpoon
Deep into the big fish, I declare—
“Stern all,” was then the well-known cry;
Says Gallagher, “we’ve done him brown,
And with my lance he soon shall die,—
It’s all up with the Scamperdown.”
The monster—savage as could be—
   Soon proved that he was awful strong,
With such a speed then through the sea
   He dragged the big whale-boat along;
Oh! 'twas a sight to see the crew,
   And hundreds watched them from the town,—
Another harpoon then they threw
   Which pierced the unlucky Scamperdown.

Now, Thatcher also was afloat,
   And pulled out there with all his might,
But when the whale came towards his boat,
   The comic singer was in a fright;
Not till 'twas dead did he begin
   To pull up close, you may bet a crown,
And off his hands he lost the skin,
   In going out to the Scamperdown.

I've heard a cove, named Harris, lent
   The lines and gear for them to toil,
But he was greedy, for this gent
   Required one-third of all the oil,
He's got the lion's share, how nice;
   And in another way he does 'em brown,
He buys the oil at his own price,—
   He'll do well out of the Scamperdown.

Poor fish! it was thy fate to die;
   But though we'll see thee here no more,
Still, Thatcher nightly will apply
   The harpoon of satire here on shore:
I've been successful too, you know,
   And nailed some big fish in this town—
If a fellow once begins to blow,
   I attack this human Scamperdown.
PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

Air., Guy Fawkes.

By the Auckland papers I perceive
That scourge Pleuro-Pneumonia,
By some wiseacres is supposed
From Australia to have flown here.
It's too bad for poor Strawberry
To be at once suspected,
And knocked upon the head, before
He's proved to be infected.

I'm told the Super issued
Quite a rabid Proclamation,
And many a brute quite innocent,
Has come to tribulation.
He rushed about in such a funk,
And had some beasts dissected,
All the Province south of Auckland
He declared to be infected.

Two vet'inary surgeons
With the beasts are doing battle—
They p'raps can doctor horses, but
What do they know of cattle?
And with their slaughter, many a brute
Gives out his final groan here—
Who's as innocent as you or I—
Of this Pleuro-Pneumonia.

The Proclamation says, no beasts
To the butchers can be handed,
If they come from Australia—
But first they must be landed;
Upon some island, (mark you that)
To prevent contamination,
There they'll be put in quarantine,
For strict investigation.

The Mogul, strange to say, has got
An island he can sell now,
And at a good price Motutapu
Might suit the bullocks well now.
And if one island ain't enough,
   And the Government want another,
There's one perhaps that they could get,
   From John the Super's Brother.

How strange it turns out just when we
   Are by this Pleuro haunted,
An island can be purchased
   At the very time it's wanted!
And as the Super on this theme
   Has spoken out so nobby,
If the Mogul don't sell Muddy Tap,
   It's not the fault of Bobby.

THE Q. C. E. IN THE GUARD ROOM.

Air....................., County Jail.

A doleful tale I'm going to tell
About a certain Auckland swell,
Who in this city cuts it fat,
And walks about in a fine white hat.
He's a volunteer but thinks it hard
To be compelled to go and mount guard;
He's a simple private still we see,
Although he keeps the Q. C. E.

Chorus—
   Be warned by little James's fate,
   And rush before it be too late;
   Pay up the ten pound exemption fee,
   And remember the little Q. C. E.

It seems one of the militia went
Unto this wine and spirit gent:—
"I warn you now for guard," he cried,
"Just come, or a substitute provide;
I know of a man I can send to you,
And he'll perform what you've to do,
Arrange with him about the fee;"
"I will," says the little Q. C. E.

Chorus.—Be warned by little James's fate, &c.
The man came down, and asked twelve bob;  
But James then shook his little nob—  
"I'll give you eight if you will go;"  
But the substitute replied, "Oh no."  
When he was wanted, I declare,  
Our little friend was not all there,—  
And the Provost-Martial sent, you see,  
His men to arrest the Q. C. E.

Chorus.—Be warned by little James's fate, &c.

"I won't walk with you through the town,  
If you want me, send the Sergeant down;"  
And unto one of them he said,  
"You touch me, and I'll punch your head!"  
The Sergeant came, and then this gent  
With him to Captain Harrison went:—  
"Here's ten pound for exemption fee,"  
Sings out the wealthy Q. C. E.

Chorus.—Be warned by little James's fate, &c.

"It's all right, James," says Harrison,  
But the Colonel wasn't to be done,  
And to nail him sent an escort down—  
And they hunted for him all over the town.  
Says James, "From duty free I am,  
For the Colonel I don't care a d——n;  
You may go and tell him that from me;"—  
What a cheeky little Q. C. E.!

Chorus.—Be warned by little James's fate, &c.

The Colonel, with a ruffled brow;  
To arrest him, sent an escort now;  
And James says to them, "I entreat  
That you won't collar me in the street,—  
Oh walk behind me now, I pray,  
I'll promise you not to run away;  
Let folks think I'm at liberty,"  
Implores the little Q. C. E.

Chorus.—Be warned by little James's fate, &c.

They shoved him in the guard-room door,  
Where many a cove has been before,—  
But when the cell there caught his eye,  
I'm not sure that he didn't cry.
At being confined, he was enraged,
He walked there like a tiger caged,—
Locked up from ten o'clock till three,
Was the broken-hearted Q. C. E.

Chorus.—Be warned by little James's fate, &c.

Says the Colonel to him, with look severe,
"To-morrow you'll be examined here,
And the surgeon then will be able to tell
If you can do seven days in the cell!"
Poor James then gave a dreadful start—
"There's something wrong, sir, with my heart,
'Twill kill me to lose my liberty,
Exclaims the unhappy Q. C. E.

Chorus.—Be warned by little James's fate, &c.

In song, I really can't express
His state of grief and wretchedness;
But Balneavis came to intercede,
And by his entreaty he was freed.
To the Colonel it was all explained,
And his liberty he soon regained,—
And about the town again we see
The cheeky little Q. C. E.!!

Chorus.—Be warned by little James's fate, &c.

POLISHING OFF THE MAORIS.

Arm—Dicky Birds.

This Auckland's getting civilized,—
Victorians come this way,
And show these Old Identities
The proper time o' day.
Amongst the great improvements
That lately they have made,—
In the street I see a member of
Lord Ashley's Shoe Brigade.

At the corner there by Somerville's—
I'd scarce believe my eyes—
'Tother day I saw a novel sight
That took me by surprise,
A great crowd had collected,  
And oh how they did stare!  
But you’re impatient p’raps to know  
What so engrossed them there.

It seems that Paul the Maori chief,  
Who dresses quite tip-top,  
Came by, and at the shoeblack made  
A most decided stop:  
“Just clean my boots,” he said, and put  
His foot upon the board;  
And the shoeblack instantly complied,  
Although he seemed quite floored.

The operation then was scanned  
By scores of idle chaps,—  
Civilians, soldiers, merchants, and  
A couple of Auckland traps;  
A Maori having his boots cleaned there  
Took them all by surprise,  
And at this novel sight I then  
Began to moralize:

Thinks I, this Maori war should now  
Come to a termination,—  
To clean their boots seems the first step  
Towards real conciliation;  
Would they could see Paul standing here!  
All carnage they’d abhor,  
Better to have their boots cleaned than  
Maintain a bootless war.

We polish off the Maoris now,  
And slay them day by day,  
Whilst Paul is being polished off  
In a far more pleasant way;  
In a brush with military troops  
How many of them fall!  
Whilst here they oft might have a brush,  
And no harm done at all.

Let’s hope there soon will be an end  
Of such warlike disputes,  
But if we still must leather them  
Oh may it be with boots!
And, instead of throwing in their midst
Those deadly hand grenades,
Let's introduce 'mongst them instead
Our useful Shoe Brigades.

Paul had his boots cleaned brilliantly,
A tanner he did pay,
And with smiles of satisfaction
The Chief then walked away;—
A Shoe Brigade will do more good
Than Cameron commanding;
'Twill touch them to the very sole,
And improve their understanding.

PRESENTED AT COURT.

Air.... Irish Historian.

I may be wrong, but I presume now,
Though in London some of us have been,
There are very few here in this room now
Who've had audience of the Queen.
I never had an invitation
To St. James's myself to transport,—
Still, I'll give you a slight illustration,
Of the way you're presented at Court.

Of course you're togg'd up like a dandy,
For you must go there in full dress,
And there the Lord Chamberlain's handy
To announce you and give you access,—
You kiss the Queen's hand, blessings on her,
The grand ceremony is short;
And you've nothing to pay for the honour
Of being presented at Court.

Now, here out of consideration,
For those who have never been there,
There's a Court that's held near this location,
Where coves are presented, I swear;
Every morning at ten there's a levee,
If you'll go there you'll have lots of sport;
But Beckham comes down on you heavy
When you are presented at Court.
You needn't be dressed very nobby,
   It aint such a spicy affair,
You're announced by a blue-shirted bobby,
   'Stead of a Lord Chamberlain there
No matter if wealthy or needy;
   To the presence you they will transport,
And your coat may be never so seedy,
   You can still be presented at Court.

At ten to the court they invite you,
   A trap with a strong Irish brogue,
Will kiss the book and he'll indite you
   A drunken disorderly rogue:
You've to listen, however unwilling,
   To his highly colored report,
And Beckham says "fined twenty shillings,"
   That's how you're presented at court.

THE BAZAAR.

Air............Lowback Car.

There are lots of little swindles
   In all New Zealand towns,
Got up by folks for easing you
   Of your superfluous browns;
There are concert rooms and theatres,
   To make you spend your tin,
But of all the various dodges tried
   For taking people in,
The best is a Fancy Bazaar,
   For done there so nicely you are,
You're never released,
   Till you're totally fleeced,
When you go to a Fancy Bazaar.

Bazaars are fashionable here,
   And in this town I vow,—
To raise the wind for lots of schemes
   The folks employ them now;
To pay the debt that's on a Church,
   Get up bazaars they will,
And actually the Volunteers
Once paid their tailor's bill,
Through the medium of a bazaar,
And the children say "take me, papa,"
Like a sheep to the slaughter
You go with your daughter
And wife to the Fancy Bazaar.

In these amiable swindles
The ladies dress quite flash,
And smile upon the Auckland swells
To make them spend their cash:
Each whiskered Lord Dundreary,
If asked to give five bob
For a charitable purpose,
Will shake his senseless nob:
But he'll rush to a fancy bazaar,
Where lots of nice ladies there are,
And he'll ogle and smile,
And be fleeced all the while,
Without murmuring at the Bazaar.

The captain of the "Omeo,"
Quite loaded came away,
And with his arms full they dismissed
Our worthy Governor Grey.
They get up lotteries in this place
With whirligig machines;
It isn't wrong,—of course the end
Quite justifies the means,—
And they rattle dice in the Bazaar,
Though strict Wesleyans p'raps they are:
First get the flats in,
Then get hold of their tin,
Is their motto when there's a Bazaar.

You buy books, dolls, and children's frocks,
And photographs galore;
Though loaded up unto the chin,
You're plagued to purchase more;
You spend your final shilling,
While the band plays "All is lost,"
An appropriate piece of music
As you find to your cost.
When they've cleaned you out in the Bazaar,
Quite negligent of you they are;
When they know you're fly-blow'n,
You're then left alone
By the damsels inside the Bazaar.

The dodges of the Ladies there
You'll think are rather strange;
If you hand them notes or sovereigns,
They don't give any change;
The way they treat a bachelor
Is enough to make him blush,
With infant's frocks and baby-caps
To the victim they will rush,
And he gets confused in the Bazaar;
Though he states he is not a papa,
They'll tell him so sly,
He'll be one by and by,
And he's victimised in the Bazaar.

ENGLISH INTELLIGENCE.

Air... Guy Fawkes.

The English Mail has just arrived,
And, as singing's my vocation,
I'll try my hand at giving
European information;
But Auckland news you want as well,
And so I don't know whether
It won't be just as well for me
To blend the two together.

The Danes soon with the Austrians
In war will be engaging;
And here pleuro-pneumonia,
So Graham says, is raging;
Monsieur Legrand's gazetted
As the Suez canal director,
And Mr. Morpeth has been made
Our nuisance's inspector.
The Queen has held a drawing-room,
And th' affair was very splendid,
And here in Auckland, Beckham's court
Was very well attended;
In America the war is slow,
And down in Taranaki
Our soldiers took one prisoner
At the storming of Kaitaki.

From Italy we hear of
Garibaldi's resignation,
And Ashton in the City Board
Gives up his situation;
The Confederates into quarters go
To escape the winter's fury,
And the Government are building huts
For the Volunteers at Drury.

The Yankee Southern journals view
The war with agitation;
And the Southern Cross says—at the "Front"
There's little alteration:
The "Alabama" at the Cape
Made Federal vessels quiver,
And the "Avon" took a ship—in tow
Up the Waikato river.

The Russians now in Poland
Cause a deal of consternation;
And in Auckland of Victorians
There's now quite an invasion;
Our young Princess of Wales at home
We learn is now a mother;
And Mrs. Muggins here presents
Her Jimmy with another.
THE MAORI PRISONERS,—A VISIT TO THE
"MARION" HULK.

Sent to the hulks! ah many a one can tell
The dreadful horrors of a floating hell,
Where vile offenders spend their wretched lives,
Fettered for ever with those cruel gypsies,
Where each groans 'neath the fearful punishment
And oaths and curses all in vain are spent.
Perchance of yore at Woolwich ye have been
And these dread prisons many times have seen:—
Have watched these dens and imaged the despair
Of the poor wretches who are penned up there.
But we've a hulk in Auckland; yes, 'tis true,
Is that a den and scene of suffering too,
Do heartless warders make their victims feel
The horrors of a maritime Bastille?
Is there within its depths a silent cell
The obstinate refractories to quell?
No, no; to prove it is no scene of woe
Embark with me now from the wharf and go,
Unto the vessel called the Marion hulk
An ancient battered ship of tidy bulk;
Nearly two hundred Maori prisoners there,
Pass now their time, but still not in despair.
No lash is heard, no curses deep resound,
No silent cell within its depths is found:
Nor shackles clanking on each mutineer,
We're not off Woolwich, but the Wynyard pier;
Into the hulk we mount and Krippner stands
And cordially receives us and shakes hands.
Who are these dusky forms upon the deck
Who walk about without the slightest check?
These are the Maori aristocracy,
The flower of the Waikato chivalry,
Who've fought against our soldiers in the field,
But to superior numbers had to yield.
They've lost their liberty, but still they joke—
Some fish for snapper, others chat and smoke.
What a change since they came from Rangiriri!
Guarded as prisoners, and foot-sore and weary;
Out of condition, half-starved, weak and thin—
Such is the state that we received them in.
Look at them now!—behold each lusty chief!
See the effects wrought by unstinted beef!
Their happy smiling faces now survey,
In ease and indolence they pass each day.
Just watch those two so deep in draughts—a game
In which they oft’ put Englishmen to shame;
The one has taken his opponent’s men,
Driven him at length into a corner then,
Till he no longer can advance or fly—
See the great triumph in the conqueror’s eye,
Whilst his antagonist owns his defeat,
And the proud victor’s conquest is complete.
Perhaps thus they fight their battles o’er again,
The men they take they view as British slain;
The board’s a pa, where they themselves bestow,
Each views the other as a British foe;
Each man that’s lost a soldier shot implies,
When a king’s taken, ’tis a captain dies.
Here sits a chief, but in the dumps seems he—
What sighs he for?—doubtless for liberty.
Against the British troops he made a stand,
But he was conquered, and he lost his land.
His heart is grieved for such unlocked for changes;
Through the port-hole he views the distant ranges;
Thinks of his home—now lost to him—with pain,
And mourns for acres he’ll not get again.
Craves for his land, for ever confiscated,
For maize destroyed, for peach-groves desolated;
Sits there in dudgeon, with disdainful eye,
And views his English captors sullenly.
He’s an exception: see Te Ori Ori,
As cook that chief seems now in all his glory;
Plies his vocation void of care or grief,
And with alacrity serves out the beef.
In cooking see him now up to the eyes,
For his lost tomahawk he no longer sighs;
Or, if he had it, with it he’d not slay,
But use it in a culinary way.
Here is another chief, and looking blue:
I don’t mean sad, but blue with the tattoo.
This man’s a warrior—a great Maori brave,
Who many a soldier has sent to his grave.
That chief who hoisted the King’s flag unhurt,
Is peacefully now hanging out a shirt.
Here is another, who in ambush stalked,
And unsuspecting pickets tomahawked,
And fortified full many a stockade,
And stopped the gaps our shot and shell had made:
Our breaches for a time he leaves alone,
And silently sits and repairs his own.
Here are two more chiefs, busy at the tub;
Like practised washerwomen now they scrub.
There's Thompson's uncle squatting on the deck,
With tattooed face and shrivelled, skinny neck.
They all seem merry. Why should they not be,
They here partake of board and lodging free?
Here they can fish or smoke the livelong day,
With draughts or slates can wile the time away.
Here prisoners are not asked to use their bones,
In the ignoble task of cracking stones.
They are pet captives. Why guard them, I say?
While fed like this, they'll never run away.
No more they long for their demolished pas:
They like to live upon the Pakehas,
To stay on board the 'Marion' suits them well,
For them no prison, but a nice hotel.
Our treatment of them is far better, sure,
Than our behaviour to our houseless poor:
They slay our soldiers, and we, in our blindness,
Retaliate by killing them—with kindness.

WILLIAM ATKIN, PRINTER, HIGH STREET, AUCKLAND.