

perfectly satisfied assurance that Her Majesty's Government really meant to deal fairly by them; and the expression was universal of the most implicit reliance on the justice and impartiality of the Governor.

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The grievances of which they now complain are chiefly the difficulty of obtaining justice in our Courts, and the old, and I believe universal, cattle grievance. With regard to the first of these, the Resident Magistrate's Court at Napier has, of course, always been open to them, but many reasons concur in preventing them from resorting thither. The distance, in a majority of cases, is an obstacle. There is no accommodation for them at Napier, nor could they afford to pay for it if there were. Again, they generally break down in their cases against Europeans when they do bring them to trial; because, whenever they have a just claim against a colonist (except in the cattle cases alluded to below), and are willing to settle it on fair means, there is seldom any difficulty, or need to go to law. It follows, therefore, that when they do take a case to Court, it is generally either founded in injustice, or their demand is so exorbitant that the Magistrate cannot give judgment in their favour. This makes them fancy that they cannot get justice, and they have gradually got out of the way of resorting to our Court, and have begun to take the law into their own hands for redress of their real or fancied grievances.

But the cattle difficulty is one of considerable magnitude and importance, and is, moreover, one which gives the Natives just grounds of complaint. Within a circle of a few miles from Napier a number of settlers are located, upon the boundaries between the purchased and Maori lands, on properties of various extent, but most of them being small holders of from 40 to 100 acres. These people all keep cattle (and many of them a considerable number) exclusively on the Maori lands adjoining their homesteads; and often their entire, and generally their principal, means of subsistence is derived from these herds. The Natives see this, and not unnaturally claim to participate in the profits derived from their own lands. But they are told it would be illegal to pay them, and these loyal and prudent settlers will not break the law. They go to the Resident Magistrate; but, as the depasturing of cattle on Maori land is contrary to the provisions of the "Native Land Purchase Ordinance," they cannot get judgment. They come to me, but I can do nothing but write a private note to the cattle owner, begging him to move his stock and to pay a fair recompense for past time. The settler treats my message with contempt, knowing me to be powerless to act, and finally the Native returns home to brood over the treatment he has received, and meditate at his leisure on the injustice of the Pakeha. Matters have gone on thus for the last seven years, the Natives all the time patiently awaiting some action being taken by the authorities or by the settlers themselves. Now, their patience is exhausted, and they are beginning to act for themselves by erecting pounds and impounding the cattle, accompanied—unfortunately, but, perhaps not unnaturally—by exorbitant demands for grass-money and poundage fees. A case of this kind occurred recently at Petane, near Napier: the settler complained to the Resident Magistrate, who issued a summons to the Natives, which, as might have been expected, was treated with contempt, the Natives saying that their applications for redress had been unheard for seven years, and they would not attend a Court which only heard Pakehas but had no ear for a Maori. The settler in this case unquestionably had great hardship to complain of, but he has the conduct of himself and his neighbours for some years past to thank for it.

I must say that many of the settlers, especially in the interior, form an exception to the above rule, but they are a minority of those whose cattle trespass on Maori land. In such cases the Maori is found reasonable in his demands, and, for the most part, acts fairly enough up to his engagements.

Upon the whole, I consider the Natives in the Hawke's Bay Province to be in a satisfactory state at present. Their confidence in the Government is being restored since the change of Ministry and the reappointment of Sir George Grey; and one hears proportionately less about the Maori King and the Runanga. Indeed Ngatikahungunu hereabouts never were very firm or enthusiastic supporters of the King, though they adopted the Runanga with great alacrity. It is true that they used the King's name, but almost entirely in connection with the land; and this from an idea, received from our system of founding all titles upon a grant from the Crown, that their land would be more secure if held in the King's name than in their own, evidently fancying there was some mysterious charm or influence in the *mana* of the Sovereign's name in relation to land. They would, I believe, at one time have fought for the King, had he been attacked in Waikato, and possibly might still do so; but that would have been from an idea that if he were put down their land would go, and not from any attachment to him as their monarch in any other sense. Even in that case they would have gone (in the first instance at any rate) to Waikato. This, I fancy, has been the extent of their adhesion to the monarchy, their inclinations being decidedly republican rather than monarchical; as is proved by their readiness in adopting the Runanga, which decided everything by a majority of voices, and had a tendency to lower the power and authority of their own chiefs.

I believe Renata was right when he said the best way to put down the King was to restore their confidence on the land question; and that the Runanga would quickly disappear before increased facilities for obtaining justice in our Courts. This is already the case (to a modified extent as yet) as regards the King in Heretaunga; and as for the Runanga, they seem to be getting tired of it, as taking up too much of their time from more profitable pursuits; and they would be glad of a decent excuse for giving up the institution altogether.

The settlers and Natives in this Province have always been on the best of terms, with the exception of a few squabbles about cattle trespass, confined for the most part to the neighbourhood of Napier. But between them and the inland settlers who really live amongst them, the utmost cordiality and confidence has continued to exist throughout all the recent period of excitement.

The Aborigines of this Province have made considerable advances in civilization, in agriculture, and material prosperity. They have erected two large and powerful water mills, with the most recent improvements in machinery; weather-board cottages are frequently to be seen at