

Hundred of Waimate; and the Western Hundred, the smallest and most compact, extending along the Western Coast from Kailhu to the South Head of Hokianga in a line forming the Northern part of the District to Wailou, including the whole of Hokianga as far as Otaua, to be called the Hundred of Hokianga.

The divisions as proposed above have from time immemorial been those of the Natives. Hokianga, although keeping up friendly relations with the Bay, has always been independent of them. To have divided the Waimate or Hokianga Hundred in two, would not only have been inconvenient and contrary to Native divisions, but more expensive to the Government in having to supply them with European Magistrates; I have therefore suggested that Hokianga should be kept entire and called the Hundred of Hokianga as above proposed. The same remarks are applicable to the other Hundred, which includes Ngatiwai and other tribes on the coast, whose relations with the Bay of Islands and Hokianga have been generally friendly, yet distinct and independent of both in times of peace, claiming to manage all their own affairs.

The numbers of chiefs proposed to represent these Hundreds have not all been nominated, owing to a proposal made to the Government to form Mongonui into a separate district; which if acceded to will exclude several chiefs living about Mongonui, and lead to the selection of many others for the Runanga living on the coast and about Wangaroa. The present organization proposes that the chiefs forming the District Runanga should be as follows:—

Six for the Waimate Hundred.  
Six for the Wangaruru do.  
Six for the Hokianga do.

This appears to me to be the most equal, as well as the most natural division of the Native force to be employed in working out the scheme, but it calls for a few remarks. Six members for the Waimate and but three for the Hokianga Hundred may appear disproportionate, but in reality it is not so, for Tamati Waka who is included in the Hundred of Waimate represents Hokianga, so that strictly speaking the Hundred of Hokianga has four representatives, and the Waimate, by far the largest Hundred, but five.

As the chiefs of the District Runanga form the basis of the whole plan of local government, and all the chiefs will have especial duties in the village Runanga and Assessors' courts, I have presumed upon requesting them to nominate to the Government two Kareres each, this they have generally done and have attended to the request, that they should be the most influential and best educated men in their tribes. These Kareres are to be attached to the chiefs, to serve summonses, and in some cases to act as clerks in Assessors' Courts; and as I propose they should attend the chiefs in all their public duties, this will add to their dignity, and as there are some of them who are nominated for the District Runanga who can neither read or write, such arrangement seems essential to work out the plan. I have therefore ventured to recommend this procedure to the chiefs.

In the vicinity of the residence of every chief of the District Runanga, I have recommended that there should be a Village Runanga or Assessors' Court, at which the chief should preside and hold his court; and as every Runanga chief is proposed to have the power of an Assessor, provision will at once be made for the administration of justice and settling their minor squabbles; and there can no longer exist any necessity for settling or rather unsettling the country by their continual "tauas." If in addition to the chiefs of this Runanga, the six Wardens were invested with the power of an Assessor, but very few more Assessors would be needed in the district; and as the supervision of all the courts will be under the District Magistrate, it is to be hoped that the great object of the peace, security and prosperity of the District, will be secured. Such a chaos as is at present existing in this district is indescribable; the "little brief authority" given to Native Assessors has, for want of proper supervision and instruction generally been used for purposes of oppression; so much so, that under the Maori Government thirty years ago I never saw so much injustice and oppression as that which has come under my notice through the abuse of their office.

After the most careful selection of Native Officers from the Assessors' list to fill the different appointments, there remain a large number, especially in the Hundred of the Waimate, unprovided for, and who are really of but very little use for good, but might if dismissed do much mischief. I venture therefore to suggest that they should be retained upon the list with the same amount of salary as heretofore, unless their good conduct warrants promotion; the whole cost to the Government will not exceed one hundred pounds (£100), which sum, if put in comparison with the amount of dissatisfaction their dismissal might create, seems to me of but trifling consideration. Their names and places of abode will be found in Enclosure No. 3, with a few remarks therewith.

Should the above proposed plan or organization of this district, as detailed, meet with the approbation of the Government, I trust that no time will be lost in bringing it immediately into operation. The District Magistrates have been instructed to give effect to the plan so far as Native Assessors' Courts are concerned, and the chiefs and others nominated and sent up for His Excellency's approval are anxiously awaiting the Governor's decision and approbation, in order that they may take their part in carrying out the scheme.

In order to give weight to the Native appointments the Government may think proper to make, I beg leave to propose that a formal circular such as is given to District Magistrates, with the address of the chief to be appointed, together with the seal of the Colony attached to it, should be prepared in the Native language and personally delivered to each by the Civil Commissioner; who should be empowered to call the chiefs and officers of each Hundred together on the occasion, with such of their friends as would like to meet them. This would afford the Commissioner an opportunity of publicly speaking to them, and prove a subject of general interest throughout the Hundred.

A few remarks upon the uniform for the Kareres to be employed may not be out of place. I would suggest that though plain it should not be destitute of ornament, something pleasing to the Maori taste, and distinctive.