

*Plan proposed.*

The plan of internal administration for Native Districts, which I submitted in the "Notes on the best mode of working the Native Lands Act," and which may be established by means of that Act, interferes in no way with the existing institutions of the Colony. It lets them work and lets the Natives gradually and safely take their part in working them. Under it they must become really subjects. They cannot have the benefits of the system without working through the Government, and accepting the authority of the officers of the Government in all matters of business with the English. They will become possessed of the franchise in common with the settlers whom the operation of the Act will introduce. For their own wealth and prosperity, they must become dependent on the presence of the Pakeha alongside of them. The only part of the system which will be in any degree independent will be the function of the Native Magistrates in deciding disputes among themselves—an arrangement which has always existed, and which relieves our officers, whilst it tends to satisfy within safe limits the desire of self-government. The Native Council will, if worked in the mode suggested, become simply a Board of Trustees for managing certain property, and appropriating the income amongst the purposes of the trust, similar to the many local Boards which already exist in the Colony. The natural effect of the measures recommended will be to unite both populations and bring them under one system.

17. The Native Lands Act puts into our hands a lever wherewith to move the whole Native population, a means of establishing law and carrying settlement everywhere. If this great power be thrown away or wasted, the mistake will deserve to be classed with the most serious of the mistakes hitherto made; yet we shall waste it if we are content to use it for effecting purchases here and there in detached patches and on no system.

This boon ought not to be given except on terms clearly expressed beforehand. Nothing can be so reasonable as to require that law shall be accepted and criminals given up in tracts in which we are going to plant our people. The whole history of the colonization of this Island shows the need of this. Much suffering and cost have resulted from the scattering of settlers among populations subject to no control. Therefore, whenever a desire is shown to have the benefit of this Act, that desire should be used as a means of inducing the people of a definite district to come within our system. Our great object should be to facilitate the transfer of their superfluous lands, and to clear those portions which will remain in their ownership of the perplexities and endless questions which arise amongst a people who have no written rules and no statute of limitations. Several districts might be marked out here in the north, and I presume in the south also, each as large as an English county, in which the people as a whole desire to be one with us, and to have the protection of one system. In some one of these districts, let us make a beginning of a system such as has been proposed, and on it concentrate our strength. I use these words in the fullest meaning. It is a necessity for us to use every means of influence to economize our power and combine our efforts towards this end. In such one district, or at the most two, let the plan be tested. If a clearly beneficial result be exhibited, that result will certainly tell upon the minds of the people throughout the Island, and will gradually dispel distrust and repugnance, as surely as the sun's heat removed the wayfaring man's cloak in the old fable.

If the system we introduce is to have the effect we desire, it must involve the acceptance of definite rules, and a real co-operation on the part of the Natives. To set up a system of nominal local government without such rules practically enforced, and without some exertion and sacrifice on their part, is to keep up a show which throws on the General Government the maximum of cost, and effects the minimum of good.

18. There is, I think, no lack of persons qualified for working this system; in fact there were some fourteen months ago in actual service in the Native Department three men who would have been quite sufficient for the central Board. Two remain; the third, who has left the Colony, might possibly be recovered. These three men possessed a large stock of knowledge, local and personal, extending over the northern and central parts of this Island, and each of them enjoyed the respect and confidence of the Natives of certain districts in a high degree. As to subordinate officers, there is a sufficient force, if we will confine ourselves to doing real work in limited districts, and so bringing one after another effectually within our system. In fact, in the mode proposed, the presence of one able and active man in each district will be all that will be permanently necessary. The gradual settlement of Europeans in the district, which must accompany the working of the Act, will, of course, bring with it a Resident Magistrate, and in due time a District Court. The main part of the purely Native work of the district will be done by the Natives themselves.

*Recent Enactments.*

19. In all this business of bringing the Natives within the operation of the law, it behoves us to be ourselves careful to act according to law, and that, the law of England. As long as we are able to say "this is part of the law of England," we ensure a certain degree of acceptance; for the belief is widely entertained among them that our superiority is owing in great measure to the fact that by the act of writing we have been able to preserve and accumulate the experience and wisdom of past generations. They are willing to recognize in the greatness of our nation a proof of the excellence of our laws. But we offer them as a boon the name of English subjects, (as we are now doing by the Native Rights Act" just passed,) and they find that in practice for them that name is to mean subjection to hard rules, which no man in England is subject to, they will not be eager to accept our offer.

20. A strong instance of the evil to which I am referring is supplied by the Outlying Districts Police Act, also just passed. From the beginning of our connection with the Natives, the one principle which has been more than all impressed upon them as the distinguishing excellence of the law, not only of England but of all civilised nations, is the principle that crime is to be avenged by smiting the actual offenders, and not by visiting the whole tribe with war; the more advanced among them have learnt to accept it as such.

The recent enactment embodies the opposite principle. It makes it lawful for the Governor to