

The Ngatiapa, at Parewanui, have devoted themselves to a considerable extent to agricultural pursuits, growing extensive crops; are the owners of several teams of plough horses, and have lately purchased a threshing machine for £75. At Reureu and Pourewa, the Maoris are sheep farming, but little is being done in other places. At Otaki, the crops grown hardly suffice for themselves, leaving them very short of provisions previous to harvest. Some flax is dressed for sale, but only in small quantities. Their principal income is derived from rent of land, which is generally anticipated, being expended chiefly in spirits, &c., to treat the visitors at their numerous meetings. During the summer a great number of Maoris from Foxton and Oroua and those neighborhoods, and a few from Otaki, obtained employment on the Government road and tramway, and did their work in a satisfactory manner, but none are now working in consequence of the wet and cold weather.

I have, &c.,

Wm. J. WILLIS, R.M.

No. 13.

ALEXANDER MACKAY, Commissioner Native Reserves, Nelson, to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Native Reserve Office, Nelson, 18th July, 1872.

In compliance with the instructions contained in your circular letter of the 3rd ultimo, requesting me to furnish a general report on the Natives in my district, and other information which may be interesting to the Colony, I have now the honor to enclose herewith the required information regarding the Natives in the Provinces of Nelson and Marlborough and the County of Westland, the Rev. Mr. Stack and Mr Watt, R.M., having already reported to you on the condition of the Natives in the Southern Provinces.

I regret that so great a delay has taken place in forwarding this report, but your circular unfortunately came to hand just as I was leaving for the West Coast, and since my return pressure of work has precluded my attending to the subject until now.

I have, &c.,

ALEXANDER MACKAY,
Commissioner.

REPORT on the condition of the Natives in the Provinces of Nelson and Marlborough and the County of Westland, for the period ended the 30th June, 1872.

THE STATE OF NATIVE FEELING.

THE disposition of the Natives of these districts towards the Europeans is uniformly good, and their attachment to the Government has remained unaltered during the whole of the disturbances in the North Island. They are perfectly aware from their numerical disproportion that they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by disturbing the friendly relations which a long intercourse has engendered between them and their European neighbors. Although a few restless spirits secretly favored the King policy when it was first enunciated, very little feeling has been displayed in this part of the Colony in regard to the movement, and although emissaries were despatched from the King party to make converts amongst them, but little effect was produced by their advocacy of the cause.

The Hauhau fanaticism which prevailed amongst the Natives of the North Island never found favor amongst them, and, although perhaps less observant of religious worship than formerly, nothing noteworthy has occurred in connection with their religious condition during the various commotions that have happened in other parts of the Colony, and the general restoration of peace in the North, as well as the establishment of schools and other institutions for the promotion of civilisation amongst the Natives there, are viewed with considerable favor by them.

MORAL CONDITION.

The moral condition of the people may be considered exceedingly good; convictions for criminal offences are very rare; in most instances the Natives are well housed and clothed and enjoy a good condition of health. There is a marked absence of the vice of intemperance as compared with former years; this is chiefly to be attributed to a movement that originated amongst themselves a year or so ago, introduced by a few of the better disposed to check the evil effects of drunkenness that then prevailed amongst them. Very few misunderstandings occur, and their general disposition and conduct towards their European neighbours is of a most friendly nature, always appealing to lawful authority when suffering wrong, as well as evincing a ready submission to the laws of the country.

There is a strong desire amongst them generally, more especially with the Natives of Whakapuaka, that schools should be established in their midst for the instruction of their children in the English language. Their educational advantages up to the present time have been very scanty, for with the exception of the Industrial School at Motueka, an institution that has never been popular amongst the Natives, there is no properly organised school for the education of their youth, and anything known by the elders in the way of reading and writing is mainly owing to the training received from the early missionaries, or through the instrumentality of Native teachers.

There are several causes which interfere with the popularity of the Native school at Motueka, the chief one being that the Natives who originally occupied a portion of the land included in the endowment to the Bishop of New Zealand assert that they have never been paid for it, and assign as a reason for not sending their children that if they receive any benefit in this way it would be a kind of acknowledgement that they have sold it.