

No. 14.

The RESIDENT MAGISTRATE, Wairoa, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, 30th May, 1874.

I have the honor to transmit, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, the following report of the Wairoa district, Hawke's Bay :—

The Natives are universally obedient to our laws, and the chief assessors always ready to enter into and unravel the somewhat complicated disputes now and again brought before us, and I am particularly indebted to Paora Apatu, the resident assessor, who invariably attends on behalf of his people, and is of much service in explaining the decisions arrived at. The chiefs generally support all Government measures, and carry with them the bulk of the people, after subjects are well discussed; but each hapu contains an increasing number of freethinkers, who, strongly tainted with the opinions prevalent on the Napier side, oppose, on principle, every Government measure, so far, the hope of extorting money being the apparent object. During the past six months especially, discussions are perpetually going on (generally political ones), and runanga whares are built, or in course of construction, everywhere. Delegates from Waikato and elsewhere from time to time arrive and depart after a round of visitings. Our chief local orators are now strongly on their metal, the best of them ambitious to be the chosen ones to attend Parliament. At the present time they are striving to obtain money, and land is being sold to produce it; the establishment of the Maori press, and funds for a swarm of delegates to attend Parliament, being at present the object. The physical condition of the people is, I consider, much on a par with that of other Europeanized districts. They are in receipt of considerable sums annually for rents, and are able to indulge in some of the European luxuries, and drunkenness at times is very prevalent.

The Public Works Department has furnished employment for many of our Native population. An excellent bridle track is being rapidly formed inland to Poverty Bay, a good road is established to Waikaremoana Lake, and travelling throughout the district is now easy.

The telegraph line, completed to Wairoa, and rapidly extending on to Poverty Bay, proved a source of discontent while in progress. Certain of our turbulent ones wished to speak, and particularly desired to extort money; but Mr. Locke, after patiently and ably ventilating the subject, carried the good wishes of all, and the line is now popular, and its great benefits duly appreciated.

A Native school will shortly be established here on an acre section near the Waihereri, presented by Paora Apatu. Tenders for the building are out, and the work will be pushed on as rapidly as possible. Sums amounting to £65 per annum have been made a first charge on certain rents, and given by the chiefs towards the salary of the schoolmaster.

Vaccination has been carefully carried on throughout the district, and several hundred children operated on. The parents, as a rule, seem perfectly willing to get it done, but do not take the slightest trouble about it. It is absolutely necessary to seek them out, whether in the tribal pa or away on the cultivation.

I have, &c.,

FRED. F. ORMOND,

Resident Magistrate.

H. Clarke, Esq., Under Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

No. 15.

Mr. HERBERT WARDELL to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER, Wellington.

SIR,—

Wairarapa, 4th June, 1874.

I have the honor to report that the state of the Natives in this district in respect to their relations with the European population, is very satisfactory, and that the authority of the Courts of law is fully recognized.

A large section of the Natives here regards Henare Matua as their leader in political matters, and join with him in desiring increased representation in Parliament.

A census taken last month gives a total Native population in the district of 742; this, when compared with the census taken by me in 1864, shows a considerable decrease.

| | MALES. | | FEMALES. | | TOTALS. |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|---------|
| | Over 15. | Under 15. | Over 15. | Under 15. | |
| 1864 | 349 | 147 | 238 | 109 | 843 |
| 1874 | 312 | 105 | 238 | 87 | 742 |
| Decrease in 10 years ... | 37 | 42 | — | 22 | 101 |

I cannot account for this decrease except by attributing it to irregular habits of life, and to intemperance, which is greatly on the increase. War has had but little to do with it, epidemic disease less.

I have, &c.,

HERBERT WARDELL,

Resident Magistrate.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.