

1875.

NEW ZEALAND.

FURTHER REPORTS FROM OFFICERS IN NATIVE DISTRICTS.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

Major MAIR, R.M., Alexandra, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Alexandra, Waikato, 29th May, 1875.

In accordance with instructions contained in your circular letter of 6th April, I have the honor to report upon Native matters in the Waikato district.

For the sake of convenience, I will divide the Native population into two parts, viz. :—

1st. The Kingites, or people occupying the country beyond the confiscated line.

2nd. The Kupapa, or loyal Natives living along the banks of the Waikato and Waipa Rivers.

With reference, then, to the first section, I have to report a marked improvement in the relations existing between the Kingites and the Europeans. There is much less of the reserve and distrust existing in former years, and an increasing desire to arrive at some arrangement by which they may, while preserving in some measure their Native independence, establish a perfectly friendly footing with the Pakeha. This improved state of feeling I attribute in part to the forbearance displayed by the Government on recent occasions, and more especially to the late interviews between the Hon. Sir D. McLean and Tawhiao. There still exists a small uncompromising party, represented by the venerable Manuwhiri and a few more chiefs of the old school, whose policy is “no surrender;” but the majority of the so-called Kingites are on the side of friendly relations and free intercourse, the chief obstacles to which are the jealousies of the chiefs and the anomalous position of Waikato, who, having no territory of their own, are endeavouring by long residence to establish a sort of interest in the lands of Ngatimaniapoto. The knowledge of this fact on the part of the latter tribe naturally creates bad blood, and anything approaching to unanimity upon any question at issue between the two seems impossible.

Each year the trade with the interior is increasing, and there is a general tendency to plant as near as possible to our settlements and save transport. In the valley of Kopua alone many thousand bushels of wheat and oats have been harvested during the late autumn, and two more threshing machines have been introduced. Owing to unfavourable weather in the spring, the potato crop was small and very late: this fact, coupled with the prodigality attending their political meetings during the year, brought them, in December and January, to the verge of starvation, and perhaps greater privations were endured than have been experienced since the close of the Waikato war.

The annual exhibition of Maori products in connection with the Central Waikato Agricultural Society's Show took place at Te Awamutu in March. There was a good attendance, but for the reasons given above the exhibits were not so numerous as in former years. This institution, supported by an annual grant from the General Government of £50, tends very much to promote friendly intercourse between the two races.

A large proportion of deaths have occurred during the year, induced probably by the scarcity of food, and latterly by measles, which is still prevalent. Among the persons of rank who have died are Te Paea Tiaho, a sister of Tawhiao's, and Hera, wife of Manuwhiri. I do not consider their general health good, and my observations lead to the belief that a gradual reduction in their numbers is going on.

There has, I am glad to say, been a marked diminution in the consumption of spirits at the great meetings: this has been brought about by the influence of some of the chiefs, and perhaps partly by a general desire to improve their condition. This is shown by the increasing demand for mills and agricultural implements. In this respect only do I note any sign of moral advancement. Hauhauism, in the comparatively mild form which has obtained for the last few years, still holds its own to the exclusion of any other form of religion, and so far as I am aware no effort has been made to win them back to orthodox creeds. I cannot say that any desire is evinced for the education of children. Very few of the young men and women can read or write, but a school in the vicinity of Alexandra might draw a few pupils.

It has for the last few years been the practice to invite all the tribes to meet at Te Kuiti in the month of March, and it has invariably been anticipated that some solution of the great difficulty would then be arrived at. Upon the last occasion hopes were entertained that His Excellency the Governor and the Hon. the Native Minister, who had been invited by Tawhiao, would be present, and that the problem would at last be solved. But when it became known that Government did not respond, Tawhiao purposely absented himself, and his example being followed by many influential chiefs, the meeting, for all practical purposes, resulted, like former ones, in failure. It is true that the stock speeches forbidding the traffic in land were made and of course assented to, but visitors from distant parts were loud in their expressions of disappointment that they had made long journeys to Te Kuiti for nothing. Speakers from Wairarapa and Whanganui urged that Waikato should appoint a commission to lay their grievances before the Imperial Parliament, but I do not think that the Kingites entertained the proposal, originating as it did in the over-conciliatory and even obsequious spirit displayed by all but the most staunch Queenites while the guests of the Maori King. I observe that in other parts of the colony this idea of redress from the Home Government has been enunciated: indeed it is not new here, and I think that it may be traced to the teachings of intriguing or officious white men. These meetings tend very much to impoverish the people in the neighbourhood of Kuiti; but are productive of good nevertheless, for they act as safety-valves. A good deal of high-toned talk is indulged in by what I may call the Ultra-Hauhau party, but no harm is done, for the bulk of the people are bent upon amusement and display, and they at last separate with the understanding that things are to remain *in statu quo* till next annual gathering. So long as this state of things exists, though the advancement of the country may be retarded, still we are not losing ground, but on the contrary the way is being gradually prepared for an amicable settlement, which sooner or later appears inevitable, and must result in the opening of large tracts of fertile land.

The most important occurrence of the year, more especially from the Maori point of view, was the meeting at Waitomo of the Hon. Sir D. McLean and Tawhiao, particulars of which have been given in a former report. A few years ago such an event would have been deemed impossible; and though nothing definite was arrived at upon this occasion, for it could only be regarded as a preliminary step, it has rendered subsequent meetings comparatively easy. Tawhiao continues to show a very friendly spirit. He has for the last four months been living at Kawhia, and he shows a disposition to make that place his permanent head-quarters. In that case he will be followed by a great number of his own people, and by this means a very important point—namely, the partial separation by their own action of Waikato from Ngatimaniapoto—would be gained, and the management of the two tribes very much simplified.

Another noticeable event is the tour—not yet completed—of Manga (or Rewi), through the Bay of Plenty settlements, undertaken apparently without any political purpose, but simply that he might enter the carved house of Ngatiawa at Whakatane, upon the opening of which a few months since special reference had been made to him by Sir D. McLean and Apanui, chief of Ngatiawa, and thus show his appreciation of the compliment and his desire for friendly intercourse. Manga, a few months ago, showed very good feeling when he passed an officer of the Armed Constabulary through from Waikato to Taranaki, giving as his reason that the officer in question was “a Pakeha of Te Makarini’s, who wished to visit his friends, and he did not see why he should be hindered from doing so.” I need hardly add that such an incident as the open passage of an official through the entire length of the King country has not occurred for at least twelve or fourteen years. Influenced by Manga, a portion of the Hauhau section of Ngatiraukawa are about to establish themselves at Otautahanga, just beyond the confiscation line at Orakau; their object being to grow grain nearer to a market than their own settlements of Aotearoa and Wharepapa, and perhaps to prevent occupation of the land by others, it having been sold some years since by Ngatihaua, who, there is good reason to believe, had no right to it whatever.

I will now remark upon the Kupapa. After the Waikato war these people sank into an indolent shiftless course of life, which they have maintained up to the present time. I think, however, that a slight improvement has taken place lately. The failure of the flax industry has caused those living near the river to turn their attention more to the cultivation of wheat and potatoes. It may at first sight appear contradictory that the closing of any legitimate source of profit should ultimately benefit a community, but I have found that by a steady pursuit of agriculture alone does the Maori, collectively, become prosperous. The wages of military service or of any other irregular vocation are spent at the public-house or in the purchase of fine clothes; the planting season is perhaps lost, and he is worse off than before. Those tribes who confine themselves to the cultivation of food are invariably more thriving and healthy. Wiremu te Wheoro and a few other chiefs have with some success awakened their people to a sense of the evils of excess in the use of spirituous liquors: a considerable number have promised reformation, but it remains to be seen whether they are sincere. The school at Karakariki, the only one in Waikato now, numbers about thirty scholars. It seems to be very well conducted by members of the Rev. Wiremu Patene’s family. Speaking generally, I am of opinion that the Natives of this district are beginning to exhibit a much better spirit, and I also think that their condition is slowly improving.

The Under Secretary Native, Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
W. G. MAIR.

No. 2.

Mr. HOPKINS CLARKE, Native Officer, Tauranga, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Civil Commissioner’s Office, Tauranga, 11th June, 1875.

In accordance with instructions contained in your circular of the 6th April last, I have the honor to make the following report:—

During the past year the Natives in this district have been most orderly, and in every way trying to follow the footsteps of their European neighbours, mixing freely with them in business transactions of all descriptions, which have always terminated satisfactorily.

There has been no crime worth recording, with the exception of three or four cases of petty larceny, and about the same number of drunkenness, there not being a single commitment to the Supreme Court.

Intemperance, without doubt, is greatly on the decrease. Many of the principal chiefs formerly addicted to this vice have become Good Templars, and by their example endeavour to induce their people to follow them. I believe they are about opening a temperance lodge for themselves.

I regret to say that, until within the last few months, the Whareroa school was entirely deserted on account of some unpleasantness between the late master and the parents of the school children. Since the present master (Mr. La Trobe) has had charge, the school has been progressing favourably. I am sorry to add that Mr. La Trobe, within the last few days, has sent in his resignation.

The crops this year have proved a great success, the average yield of wheat being about twenty bushels to the acre. The quantity grown by the Natives I estimate at the lowest to be about 15,000 bushels. Owing to the reduction in the price of wheat this year, the Natives are naturally a little disappointed, the price being 4s. 3d. per bushel. Tauranga wheat maintains the highest price in the market. The flour mill for the Natives, which has been completed, has been erected on the Wairoa River, and will prove a great boon to the district. An experienced miller has been engaged, who will do his work at so much per bushel of wheat. The Natives have very much improved in their agricultural pursuits. They have in many villages erected substantial fences of the best material.

The mortality among the Natives, during the past year, has been great; in one hapu alone, the Ngatihe, there have been seventeen deaths, principally children, and a few old people. Measles has been rife in the district, but, with a few exceptions, has not been fatal, every attention having been given by the medical officers of the district, who, on more than one occasion, travelled eighteen or twenty miles to render assistance. Many sick people were brought to the Native hostelry, and there received medical treatment.

The only public works undertaken by the Natives as a body were on the Katikati Road, for which they received the sum of £130. They are very good workmen, and are often employed by contractors, for which they receive wages at the rate of from 5s. to 6s. per day.

It is hardly necessary to state that the Natives of this district are loyal, Hauhauism being only a name. For instance, during Rewi Ngatimaniapoto's visit, I heard only one strong Kingite speech, and that was made by a chief of no great influence, and was only made to court Rewi's favour, to which Rewi would not reply.

In conclusion, I beg to state that I think the Natives are most orderly and well behaved.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

HOPKINS CLARKE.

No. 3.

Mr. H. W. BRABANT, R.M., Opotiki, to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Opotiki, 1st June, 1875.

I have the honor to lay before you the following as my annual report on Native matters in the Opotiki district:—

1. *Condition of Natives, Physical and Moral.*

The physical condition of the Natives in the district remains much as when I reported last year, food having been plentiful, and their state of health above the average. Since then, two chiefs of some note have died—Te Matenga Peia, of Te Kaha, and Kaperiere Tamaiarohi, of Whakatane, both men of influence in their tribes, and staunch supporters of the Government. The measles has been prevalent during the last few months in this district; and has gone through most of the settlements, but has been a very mild form of the disease, and although a few children are said to have died of it, I think in most cases they have been moribund lives. The Natives have been assisted to the fullest extent possible with medical advice and drugs.

As regards the criminal statistics of the district, no Native has been convicted during the past year of any offence against the person. Seven cases of indictable offences have been charged against them at the Court (mostly larceny): of these, two were committed for trial, two were summarily convicted and sentenced to imprisonment, while three were dismissed. Only two quasi-criminal charges were brought against Natives—one for sly grog-selling, and one for a breach of Impounding Act—in both of which convictions ensued. I believe drunkenness is not so prevalent as it was a year or two ago, although some of the Natives, especially the chiefs, are still addicted to it. Only one conviction took place during the past year at the Court. This, however, is no criterion of the extent of the evil, as it takes place principally at Native gatherings, remote from the European settlements and from police control. The example and influence of the chief Wepiha Apanui has done much to check intemperance at Whakatane.

2. *Crops and Native Industries.*

I am glad to be able to report that cereals have been more extensively grown during the past year than since I have been resident here. In the Eastern portion of the district a large breadth of wheat has been grown, the Raukokore Natives having sold over 3,000 bushels, and those at Te Kaha nearly 4,000. The Whakatohea and Ngatiira have, as usual, grown a large quantity of maize, and I notice

that the Ngatipukeko at Te Poroporo, near Whakatane, are this year large producers of this grain. I am endeavouring to obtain through the Native Assessors a return of the quantity of grain grown by each tribe, but I regret that the season is not sufficiently far advanced to have it completed in time to accompany this report.

Whaling has as usual been pursued by some of the Natives at the eastern end of the district with some success.

The European settlers of Opotiki continue to employ to some extent the Natives residing near the settlement at seed and harvest times.

3. *Disposition towards Government, Political Feeling, &c.*

Of the Natives in the Eastern portion of the district from Cape Runaway, to Torere, there is little to report, their loyalty and good conduct being conspicuous as in past years. Some of the surrendered rebels (Aitanga-a-Mahaki) have availed themselves of your permission to return to Poverty Bay. The bulk of them however are still at Torere, and I believe are not so eager to return as they were when they were detained by Government. Of the Whakatohea, including the Ngatiira, I have little to remark except that they have been quiet and well-behaved, and I believe as industrious as any Natives in New Zealand. The recent appointment by you of two of their chiefs to act as Native Assessors has I believe given them great satisfaction. The Ngaitama hapu are still very anxious to have the division of their land reserves carried out. Te Waru and his party of surrendered rebels have been cultivating this year near Waiotahi, and have reaped fair crops. I have lately, in accordance with your instructions, selected fresh land for cultivation by them, of the quality of which they have now no reason to complain. A small party of the Arawa still occupy Ohiwa as a garrison. The Whakatane Natives are in a more satisfactory state than they have been since the war. The division of their reserves amongst the several tribes has been a matter which has occasioned continual discontent and quarrels amongst them ever since the land was confiscated. Mr. Halse came down to divide these reserves, and his arrangements, though since slightly altered, have on the whole given satisfaction, and I think have been accepted by all as a final settlement of the question.

The Ngatipukeko, having all now moved up the river, have again commenced cultivating extensively, and will doubtless (the soil being so fertile) rapidly regain the prosperous state formerly enjoyed by them. The Ngatiawa have not cultivated so extensively this year, having been engaged throughout it in building a grand carved house, said to be one of the finest in New Zealand, and which you opened in March last. Your having done so, and the admiration which this house (a great part of which was carved by his own hand) has excited, has caused the old chief Apanui great pleasure, and, perhaps it is not too much to say, will gladden the few remaining years of his life. During the past month the house has also been visited by the chief Rewi Maniapoto, and a party of Waikatos (chiefly Ngatimaniapoto). These were received in a friendly manner by myself and the resident Natives, and I doubt not the impression on them made by their visit to this coast will be a favourable one.

During the past year the Urewera, though still disputing amongst themselves on their land questions, &c., have uniformly preserved friendly relations with the Government and with neighbouring tribes.

In fine, I can hardly speak too highly of the readiness with which all the tribes in this district submit to our laws and the wishes of the Government.

4. *Public Works undertaken by Natives.*

These have not been so extensive as in the two previous years. This, however, has been caused to some extent by the Public Works Department not being always prepared to afford Natives the work they are desirous of obtaining.

During the last year the Ngatiawa and Ngatipukeko have done some little work on the Whakatane and Te Teko Road.

The Urewera have completed some two or three miles, and are still working on the Whakatane Valley Road.

The work on the Opotiki and East Cape Road, I regret to say, has this year been confined to making a few improvements where urgently needed, and to necessary repairs of parts already made.

On the Opotiki and Ormond Road, which at length approaches completion, parties of the Ngaitai and Whakatohea have been working from time to time.

5. *Native Schools.*

One new school (at Te Kaha) has been opened during the year, and those already established have been kept up; my report on which I shall shortly do myself the honor to lay before you.

In conclusion, will you permit me to draw your attention to the fact that European settlement is now progressing satisfactorily, and that a considerable breadth of land is yearly added to that in cultivation, and from time to time houses are erected on the settlers' homesteads. I have been pleased to notice also, during the past year, a considerable accession to the European population, both of men of means and also of the labouring classes, these last chiefly immigrants lately landed in Auckland.

The influx of Europeans, should it continue, which I see no reason to doubt, will be a guarantee for the continuance of that law and order which now exists in this and the surrounding Native districts.

I have, &c.,

HEBBERT W. BRABANT,
Resident Magistrate.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

No. 4.

Dr. ORMOND, R.M., Wairoa, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, 1st June, 1875.

I have the honor to report, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, on the state of the Natives in this district.

As to political and general good feeling towards the Government, I can now report favourably. Our chiefs and influential people have lately visited Napier, and, while there, had opportunities of seeing Sir Donald M'Lean, and of ventilating many real or imaginary grievances. They seem now to be contented, and a much better tone of feeling prevails among them. Some four months ago, it was a very different state of things. Several large runanga whares were then completed, and the occasion celebrated by large gatherings of Natives, including many strangers from Waikato, Wairarapa, and distant parts of Hawke's Bay, &c. At this time also many very exciting and inflammatory letters were received by each mail, and some very bitter feeling engendered. Food now forms but a very limited item at these feasts. Grog—chiefly rum—is consumed in immense quantities, and general drunkenness prevails.

Between the Wairoa and Urewera Natives there now exists much mistrust and unfavourable feeling, the chief bone of contention being the division of the confiscated land.

I am happy to report that the Native school is now started at the Waiherere, the church there having been repaired and given over to the school trustees by the chief Paora Apatu until the projected school-house is completed. Owing to the excessively wet weather which has prevailed ever since the opening, the attendance has been but limited, but I am assured that a number of children will be sent when the cold and rainy season is over. Some of the chiefs do not appreciate or encourage the school, Paora Apatu and Tamihana Huata notably so. Some months since, when directed by Government to start the building of the school, I divided into three portions the sawn timber required, and gave the Upper Wairoa Natives one, the Middle ones a second, and the Lower River ones the third, so that all should have an interest in the work, and also participate in the profits. For a time all worked well, and the order was nearly completed when I received intimation that two of the parties were selling the timber they had cut for the school. They informed me that they had changed their minds, that some of them had lately visited Poverty Bay, and that they found the schools there at a standstill, and working no good. I have since learned that they regretted having promised that certain portions of rents of leased lands should be paid annually towards the support of the schoolmaster. A large portion of this land they are now about to sell to Government, and they fear that they may still be held responsible. So that, until this question of purchase is settled, I see no chance of getting them to start again the cutting of the timber.

The telegraph is now in active use as far as Poverty Bay, and during its erection there was but little trouble or hindrance from the Natives. The majority of them now understand its great usefulness.

As regards law: criminal cases, in which Natives were the defendants, have been few in number during the past year, and the fines inflicted were readily paid, assaults and petty larceny being the charges. The civil cases have been numerous, chiefly for debts contracted at the stores. When forced to do so, the Natives find the means to satisfy these claims.

The Crops.—Owing to the long-continued dry weather of last summer, and the ravages of the wire-worm, the main crops of potatoes and kumaras were generally a failure. The Natives had extensively cultivated equal to almost treble the amount of the past several years, stimulated thereto in anticipation of a visit from the Hon. the Native Minister, and long-arranged visits from distant relatives and friends. The late crops, though not extensive, are reported as generally good, and the maize crop is said to be excellent, and to have been largely cultivated.

The mortality among the Natives for the past year is much below the average, and chiefly among the scrofulous children. Although measles have prevailed among the white population, and scarce a family has escaped, yet, excepting some two or three isolated cases at Waikaremoana, the Natives have kept so far free from it.

The Under Secretary, Native Department.

I have, &c.,

FREDK. F. ORMOND.

No. 5.

The Rev. J. W. STACK, Christchurch, to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 29th June, 1875.

I have the honor to forward the enclosed report on the Canterbury Maoris for the past year, and to apologise for the delay which has occurred in forwarding it, which was owing to my being ill at the time it ought to have been sent.

The Hon. the Minister for Native Affairs, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

JAMES W. STACK.

REPORT on the CANTERBURY MAORIS, 1874 to 1875.

THERE is little of any interest to report about the condition of the Natives in this district during the past year.

The agitation respecting the "unfulfilled promises" continues. A meeting was held at Arowhenua on the 27th of May, but it was not so largely attended as the previous meeting held the year before at Kaiapoi. A statement of their case was drawn up by the Natives at this meeting, and presented to His Excellency the Governor during his late visit to Canterbury.

The result of so much time and thought being bestowed upon the discussion of these land claim is that everything else is neglected, and the people are consequently poorer than they ought to be.

The one gratifying feature in the conduct of the Natives in this province is their habitual temperance. It is remarkable that a people once notorious for their drunkenness should be able to exercise such self-command, and to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors, because they believe that the abuse of them would be fatal to the success of their scheme for securing further compensation for their land.

The Natives have not escaped the prevailing maladies here. But though many have suffered from low fever and measles, comparatively few have died.

I have afforded relief to several aged people, but in such a manner as to prevent their friends saddling the Government with their entire support.

The attempt to establish a school at Little River has not yet succeeded, a difficulty having again risen as to the site.

The objection raised by various school committees to the reception of Native children into English schools prevents many from being taught who might otherwise be. But the committees can hardly be blamed as long as the Maoris continue to pay so little attention to personal cleanliness.

I am glad to report that the general morality of the people is good, and that they have been entirely free from all crimes of a serious nature during the past year.

JAMES W. STACK.

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