

are opening their eyes to the riches to be derived from wool-growing, and to the tending of cattle, and pastoral pursuits will ere long become the order of the day.

No public works that I am aware of have been commenced during the past year in my district, upon which Maoris have been employed. The bridle-tracks from Ranana and Iruharama to the plains have been taken advantage of during the past summer both by Maoris and Europeans, and goods have been conveyed on horseback, by pack saddles, in considerable quantities; but until a good cart road has been made from Wanganui to Murimotu, that extensive tract of open country will remain sealed up, and settlement of a valuable and most available territory will be retarded to an indefinite period.

Touching "other matters that may prove interesting to the Colony," I beg to refer to my late prolonged visit, in February and March last, to the Tuhua country. The cause of my visiting that distant part (some 230 miles by the Whanganui River), was the occasion of an important meeting called by the renowned chief Rewi Maniapoto, in conjunction with the Tuhua and other Whanganui chiefs, including Mete Kingi, late M.H.R., which meeting was of political importance, and fully reported on by me at the time.

The question of the Tuhua lands, and land in general, was mainly discussed; and Rewi enunciated a fresh political principle respecting future land sales, to the effect that he had done with opposing actively the sale of land; that those who persisted in so doing must abide by the consequences of their acts; that his counsel and advice still was to abstain from selling land; and he asked for their personal support and adhesion in developing this policy.

An expression of opinion, favourable or otherwise, was demanded of the meeting (which consisted of some 300 Natives, with leading chiefs of Whanganui, Taupo, and Waikato), but no response was given, although satisfaction was expressed at the statements made by Rewi, that the tribes might follow out their devices in the matter, and abide the result.

The country here is of considerable elevation (some 2,000 feet above the sea), and consists of open fern and forest land. The climate is most equable, the soil in many parts very rich, and will no doubt ere long form the happy home of many a thriving English settler, and will be foremost as a grain-producing district.

The forest trees (of all kinds and shades) remain in their primeval state; and varieties are to be found which are unknown in the coastal regions.

The pa Rurumaiakatea, where we took up our quarters, was rendered famous as being the camping ground of Te Kooti, and from whence he was dislodged by the Government forces despatched by the present Defence Minister, under the generalship of the chiefs Keepa Rangihiwini and Topia Turoa. I was told of many dark deeds enacted in the neighbourhood by that bloodthirsty rebel and his myrmidons, over and above which, the country thereabouts is famous in Maoridom as being the locality where many a battle was fought by Maori warriors in days gone by, when strife and bloodshed were the order of the day, and cannibalism, with its foul orgies, universally prevailed—and that only a generation or so back! Surely the often-abused missionary may take some credit for the change which has come over the spirit of the dream! At any rate, I for one feel proud to say that I am the son of a missionary, who was respected in his time, and who did his share of the heroic work of paving the way for the colonization of this country.

Referring to the question of disputed tribal territory, I am informed by Major Kemp that at his late visit to Renata Kawepo, at Napier, that chief, on behalf of his tribe, agreed to leave the matter of the Murimotu boundary line, in difference between the Whanganui and Kahungunu people, to the guardianship of Kemp, as agreed upon between those chiefs; and the survey thereof, under the personal supervision of Keepa, will shortly be undertaken. This is a matter of some moment, and will facilitate the opening up of the interior; as, after the land has gone through the Court, the Government will, in all probability, be able to secure the acquisition of a large amount of available territory for immediate settlement by the Europeans. With reference to Maori schools, as I intend to report specially on them, I would merely say that two are in full operation at suitable localities on the Whanganui River, under most efficient management; and that everything has been done by the Government in fostering these (to the Natives) invaluable institutions, and which they ought to better appreciate than they do, as the attendance at both schools is not so numerous or regular as it ought to be. However, sufficient progress has been made to afford encouragement and some hope for the future that the Maori race will ere long awake to the necessity of taking due advantage of these seminaries, which will open up to them the highway to learning and advancement as a people.

There has been a good deal of sickness amongst the Maoris during the past year at the up-river pas; but owing to the kind provision made by the Government in dispensing useful medicines amongst them, through the instrumentality of the school teachers, life has been saved in numerous instances. In some extreme cases the Natives, at their own expense, have availed themselves of the skilful services of Dr. Tripe, who has effected several cures amongst them, and has thus become quite popular as a Maori doctor; and it is not unlikely that an effort will be made by Major Kemp, for the tribe, to secure his services permanently, and free of cost, upon his accepting a block of land by way of compensation, and as an inducement to undertake this important duty.

It is gratifying to state that a willing response was made here in November last to the request of the Hon. the Native Minister to furnish contributions of articles of Maori manufacture and workmanship, in the shape of mats, weapons of all kinds, specimens of flax, greenstone ornaments, &c., for display at the Philadelphia Exhibition; and I trust the Committee of Management in that far-famed city of John Penn renown will take the hint given, and follow the example of their great ancestor (a friend to all aborigines), by returning said articles with the addition of some specimens of American manufacture, for the benefit of the Maori people.

The Maori newspaper (*Waka Maori*) still maintains its circulation in this district, and the contributors to its support keep up their numbers, my list showing over 150 paying subscribers. They generally take great interest in passing events, and this serial is the means of affording them much useful information and profitable entertainment.