

SESS. II.—1879.

NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE AFFAIRS, RAGLAN DISTRICT

(REPORT BY R. S. BUSH, ESQ., R.M., ON).

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

Mr. R. S. BUSH to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Raglan, 1st November, 1879.

I have the honor to report for your information that I proceeded to Waikato on the 18th ultimo, for the purpose of visiting the Ngatihaua Tribe at its different settlements. I reached Tamahere on the 21st ultimo. Here I saw Te Hakiriwhi and other Natives at their different residences. Te Hakiriwhi, Te Raihi, and some others had that day returned from Hikurangi, where they had been to *uhunga*. Nearly the whole of these Natives reside in wooden houses, and are farming their land in the European manner.

On the following day I proceeded to Maungatautari, which is the largest settlement this tribe possess. The Natives living there have made a good road to Pukekura, on which there are three or four tolerably long side-cuttings. I estimate this work roughly at £300 or £400. This road was made at the instigation of, and under the superintendence of, Te Ngakau, the object being to have a passable road to Cambridge for the purpose of transporting their produce to market. Tukere and other chiefs expressed a wish that the Government would erect a bridge over the Hauoira Creek, the only stream which requires a bridge on the whole road. A bridge about thirty feet span would be ample, I think.

Upon rising the plateau on the Maungatautari side of this stream, you come upon very extensive cultivations of wheat, oats, and clover, enclosed with a ditch and bank fence, on both sides of the road for a considerable distance. These Natives are well off for food, and have about four hundred acres of wheat growing. They appear to be more industrious every year, which is certainly very gratifying. The Maungatautari people were rather crestfallen at the loss of their European miller, who had left them. On the 23rd, Tukere and myself searched for this man, and, after several hours' riding from place to place, we succeeded in finding him, when he refused to return to the mill on the terms of the old arrangement; and thus the matter remains. I fear this will prove somewhat discouraging to these people, and may prevent some of them from growing wheat as extensively as they might do if he were still there.

I left Maungatautari on the morning of the 22nd, for Mangakopara, near Aratitaha, where a meeting was being held. Hauauru, and other chiefs from Rangitoto, near Wharepapa, had arrived for the purpose of asking these Natives to retire to Hikurangi, because there was a land dispute between them and a man called Mika, of the Ngatiapakura Tribe, who had taken possession of a piece of land called Panehaku, which the Ngatihaua had passed through the Court and obtained a title for. Mika, I believe, alleges that he was not in this district at the time this land was adjudicated upon. Panehaku originally belonged to Ngatiapakura. The Ngatihaua claim it, I think, by right of conquest. In the days of Te Wharoa some fighting took place between those two tribes, when the former were defeated. A pa of theirs, at Rangiohia, was taken, and there were several small skirmishes in the vicinity of Panehaku and on the banks of the Mangapiko Stream. There was also a discussion as to some European cattle which had been driven off. Kaukiuta claimed compensation for hay eaten by the trespassing cattle. Upon his making a claim on the owner of the cattle, he was informed that two of his relatives—namely, Hori Tawariki and Haimona—had taken 1s. 6d. a head, and had entered into an arrangement to allow the cattle to run on their land for that sum per week per head. One of the animals—a horse—had died, and hence the discussion as to who was liable. Nothing was arranged. I suggested that each party should appoint some European friend as arbitrator, both previously agreeing to abide by their decision. This they agreed to do; so I trust nothing further will be heard of the matter. I believe the Natives implicated in the land dispute agreed to remove to Hikurangi. Whether they will do so remains to be seen.

On the 24th I proceeded to the Pukekura settlement. Many Natives from this settlement have for the last two years migrated to Mangapiko, where they have an extensive cultivation. These Natives are anxious that the Government should make a short piece of road from the confiscated line, to enable them to get their produce to Cambridge. They reside some distance beyond the confiscated boundary, and are willing to make their portion of the road to the confiscated line. This is the second