

1880.

NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS IN NATIVE DISTRICTS.

[In continuation of G.—1A, Sess. I., 1879.]

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

No. 1.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, to OFFICERS in NATIVE DISTRICTS.

(Circular No. 1.)

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 16th March, 1880.

I have the honor, by direction of the Hon. Mr. Bryce, to request you will be good enough to furnish your annual report upon the state of the Natives in your district, to reach this office if possible not later than the 31st May proximo, in order that it may be printed for the General Assembly.

I have, &c.,

T. W. LEWIS,

Under-Secretary.

No. 2.

Mr. G. KELLY, Mangonui, to the HON. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Mangonui, 6th May, 1880.

In compliance with instructions contained in your circular of 16th March, 1880, No. 1, I have the honor to report that the Natives of this district are in a very satisfactory condition—peaceable and loyal, as has always been their character. There has been less crime amongst them than usual, and drunkenness but rarely occurs. But one arrest was made since my last report, as against eleven in the previous year. Four Natives were brought before the Court on 5th March last, charged with breach of the Dog Nuisance Act, and, although they expressed great indignation on being served with the summonses, which they tore in pieces as soon as they received them, they all appeared in Court, and, upon conviction, paid a fine of 5s. and costs each, besides taking out collars for their dogs. They behaved so well that the Bench expressed surprise at their calm submission to the order of the Court, this tax being so very distasteful to the Natives. I feel proud to say that there could scarcely be found a more law-abiding people even amongst a European community than the Natives of this district.

The people are chiefly occupied in kauri-gum-digging. This article has for the last six or seven months commanded so high a price that the Natives have been better off than usual: in fact, it is their only means of obtaining a living. They subsist almost entirely upon their gum earnings. The small price they obtain for produce from their cultivations, owing to the difficulty of getting such to a market from want of roads (no money having been spent in this district for opening roads through Native land for many years), so disheartens them that they have almost abandoned their cultivations, and do not grow sufficient for their own consumption. I trust the road works now about to be commenced by the Public Works Department in this district will have the effect of bringing about a more wholesome state of affairs.

Now that the young Maoris are being educated in the rudiments of an elementary education, I hope soon to see them further educated by the example of thrifty settlers, induced to settle in their neighbourhood through the opening-up of our district by roads. The kauri gum will soon be exhausted: five or six years at the most I think will terminate this source of subsistence, when they will be compelled to cultivate their soil.

The only stirring event which transpired during the past year was the marriage of Mr. Leopold Puhipi, the eldest son of Mr. Timoti Puhipi, the principal chief of the Rarawas, with Miss Hardiman, of Hokianga. He obtained a certificate under the Marriage Act, and the marriage was solemnized in the old Mission church at Kaitaia, in the end of February last. Natives from all parts of the district, and also a great many Europeans, assembled to witness the celebration, and take part in the festivities, which lasted over two days.

The health of the Natives has been above the average during the past year, and by the following statistics it will be seen that mortality amongst them is on the decrease.

TOTAL of BIRTHS and DEATHS of NATIVES within the District of Mangonui for period of two years prior to the 31st December, 1879.

Period.	Births.	Deaths.	Excess of Births over Deaths.
1st January to 31st December, 1878	56	51	5
1st January to 31st December, 1879	57	49	8
Total	113	100	13

NATIVE CENSUS, DISTRICT OF MANGONUI.

Date when taken.	Total.	Increase.	Decrease.
June quarter, 1874	2,071	...	...
December quarter, 1877	1,732	Nil	339
December quarter, 1879, reckoning excess of births over deaths, shows a population of	1,745	13	Nil.

I have, &c.,
GEO. KELLY,

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

Officer in Charge of District.

No. 3.

Mr. VON STÜRMER, R.M., Hokianga, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Hokianga, 7th May, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular No. 1, of 16th March, 1880, requesting me to forward my annual report on the state of the Natives in this district, and beg to forward the report required herewith.

There has during the past year been perhaps more visible change in the Natives in this district than has been observable for many years past. I am sorry to state that in September last a serious breach of the peace between two hapus of the Ngapuhi, in which several lives were lost, occurred in the bush near Otaua. The ostensible cause of the quarrel was the survey of land, the boundary-lines of which the Ngaitu insisted upon cutting, and which the Ngaitewake endeavoured forcibly to prevent. Both parties appeared on the ground armed, and came into collision, when a sharp conflict ensued, two on one side and three on the other being killed outright, and several wounded, who have since recovered. By the speedy intervention of Maihi Paraone Kawiti, Kerei Mongonui, Hone Mohi Tawhai, and other influential chiefs, this quarrel, which at first threatened to spread through the various hapus, was finally settled, the disputed land being handed to Maihi Paraone Kawiti, and the peace of the district, which was so seriously endangered, secured. For further particulars on this subject, I would refer you to my report No. 35-79, of the 3rd October, 1879.

Latterly, the Natives have taken a great interest in politics, and, within the last few months, held several large meetings, at which they have fully discussed the present state of affairs in the South, the Native Land Act in all its bearings, and the Treaty of Waitangi, together with other matters relating to themselves; and appear to be watching the course of events with a considerable amount of interest. A feeling of sullenness and distrust of Europeans appears to be spreading amongst them, which may in a measure be accounted for, or occasioned by, a knowledge that their former power and influence as a people is rapidly passing away, seeing, as they do, the steady increase in numbers and prosperity of the Europeans around them, and their own falling-off both in numbers and territorial wealth. And some of the leading men amongst them have openly said that they would do their utmost to prevent any more lands being sold, either to the Government or to private purchasers. Still, with all this, they are as amenable to the law as they have ever been, and give but comparatively little trouble.

Physically, I cannot report favourably. The health of the people during the past year has been very bad, and a considerable number of children and young people have died, more particularly in the neighbourhood of the Rarawa settlements at Lower Waihou, where, during September and October, upwards of twenty children were carried off by low fever, and doubtless many others would have succumbed to the malady but for the timely arrival of medical aid and comforts, supplied to them by the Government. I may state that these attacks of fever, which always appear amongst the Natives in the spring of the year, may be in a great measure attributed to the scarcity and bad quality of the food to which they are at this season reduced, owing to their winter supplies having been consumed, through their want of care and general improvidence, and also to their laziness and want of energy in taking the proper steps to meet the difficulty. The want of proper ventilation in their houses, they being small, damp, and overcrowded, and the absence of ordinary cleanliness in their persons, is also another cause of disease; and I much fear but little good can be effected for their benefit until they themselves are fully alive to the importance of some radical change in their habits and mode of living.

During the year a large number of the people have been engaged road-making for the County Council, and also in digging kauri gum: at the latter occupation they have realized large sums of money, a single individual in many instances earning as much as £6 and £8 sterling per week. I am glad to be able to state that drinking has not been nearly so prevalent as formerly, and that their earnings are expended principally in good clothing and other necessary articles, though they are still very reckless and improvident, and do not appear to understand the value of money, or make any kind of provision for the future.

The crops have been good, but not beyond the average of former years; but the supplies stored for winter use are not large, as a very large quantity of the kumaras, potatoes, and pork raised has been consumed, or rather wasted, at the numerous meetings held in this district of late. I observe that in several of the settlements large patches of tobacco have been planted and have been a great success, and the use of the imported article is being superseded by that of their own manufacture. This is more particularly noticeable in the settlements on the Mangamuka and the Upper Waihou Rivers.

A considerable number of civil cases in which the Natives were interested have been brought before the Court and adjudicated upon; and no crimes of any magnitude have been brought under the notice of the police, a member of the Armed Constabulary Force being stationed here, and whose uniform the Natives appear to hold in great respect. And I consider it a matter of congratulation that so large and populous a district as this continues to be so free from crime. I have, during the year, found it necessary to send two Natives (men of some rank) to gaol, under "The Imprisonment for Debt Abolition Act, 1874," and the result has been good, and will I trust have some effect in preventing the utter recklessness with which the Natives have hitherto obtained goods on credit, in very many instances on false representations; though at the same time I feel bound to state that I do not consider the dealers and storekeepers as being altogether free from blame in this matter.

The various Native schools in operation in this district are doing a great deal of good, and in many instances are well supported by the Natives, both in the largeness and the regularity of the attendance; but I am sorry to state that the two schools at Waima and Lower Waihou are quite deserted, which is in a measure owing to the high rate of kauri gum—nearly every Native, including the women and children, being engaged in collecting it—and also, in the case of the latter school, to the number of deaths that occurred during the spring of the year. The whole of the Native schools have lately been thoroughly inspected by Mr. Hislop, the Secretary of the Department of Education, and Mr. Pope, the Organizing Inspector, who will doubtless report fully to the Government on their condition and management.

In closing this report, I am sorry I cannot give a more satisfactory account of the state of the Natives under my charge, and can only hope that, as time passes and the Maoris become better acquainted with European habits and customs, and more alive to the advantages to be derived from a careful attention to the laws of health, a vast improvement will be visible both in this district and throughout the colony. On the other hand, if they still persist in living in their present condition, there can be only one future before them—extinction as a people—and that at no very distant period.

I have, &c.,

SPENCER VON STÜRMER,
Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 4.

Mr. E. M. WILLIAMS, Bay of Islands, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Puketona, Bay of Islands, 11th May, 1880

In compliance with the request contained in your circular letter of the 16th of March last, I have the honor to forward, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, my annual report on the state of the Natives of this district.

I have much pleasure in recapitulating the statements given in former reports, that peace and quietness continue to exist throughout the district.

In the moral and physical condition of the Natives there is but little change to notice; some are endeavouring to improve their position by adopting European manners and customs, but the majority are contented to live as did their fathers. Drunkenness is not so prevalent as formerly, a change for the better in some of the leading chiefs having had a corresponding influence upon the people. Sickness has been prevalent, and many deaths have occurred, which is not to be wondered at when their careless mode of living is considered.

The Resident Magistrates' Courts at Waimate, Russell, Kawakawa, and Whangaroa have been regularly held, the Natives in attendance respectful in their conduct, and quietly assenting to the decisions given. Their principal occupation has been that of kauri-gum-digging, in the collection of which both sexes are engaged, the high prices lately given for this article keeping them well supplied with money.

For many months past the Natives throughout the district, at the instigation of Hongi, son of the renowned chief of that name, have been collecting funds for the purpose of erecting at Waitangi a building in commemoration of the Treaty to be called "The Treaty of Waitangi;" and, the amount from time to time collected having exceeded the sum of £700, tenders were invited and accepted for the erection of the work, and a spacious and handsome building is now in course of completion, which the Natives propose shall be opened in the month of March, 1881, when a large gathering may be anticipated from all parts of the colony.

Having been called upon by the Government to resign the office which for nineteen years I have held as Resident Magistrate of this district, in concluding this my last report I take the opportunity of bearing testimony to the marked improvement manifested by the Natives in their respect and submission to British law, their loyalty to the Government, and friendship towards the settlers.

I have, &c.,

EDWARD M. WILLIAMS.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 5.

Mr. J. S. CLENDON, Kaipara, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Helensville, Kaipara, 19th April, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular No. 1, of the 16th of March ultimo, and, in accordance with the request contained therein, to report for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister as follows:—

That the Native population in the Kaipara District have, during the past year, been exceedingly quiet and orderly, and their relations with their European neighbours of the most amicable description. There has also been a general disposition evinced by them to reduce the consumption of alcoholic liquors—a fact more particularly noticeable in country places than in the vicinity of towns.

A very much smaller quantity of land has been disposed of than during the previous year, but a great impetus was given a short time since to the gum trade by the rise in price of that article to an extent never before obtained. The prices realized for the gum enabled the Natives to procure all necessary provisions and clothing from the European traders during the winter and spring months, whilst their crops were unavailable.

A very small proportion of the land in Kaipara remains unadjudicated by the Native Land Court; consequently there is little cause for dispute amongst the several hapus on that head.

The Ngatiwhatua and Uriohau people assembled at the settlement of their principal chief, Paul Tuhaere, at Orakei, in March last, to which delegates had been invited from both the northern and southern tribes. The short time elapsed since the conclusion of the said meeting has not allowed any result to present itself from the expression of opinions of the several chiefs thereat, and nothing whatever has occurred to cast the smallest doubt upon their loyalty and good faith remaining intact.

The instances of crime amongst the Natives during the past year have been but few, amounting in all to five. This fact alone shows well for their peaceable and friendly disposition.

The Uriohau residing at Otamatea and Pouto are the greatest cultivators—the Ngatiwhatua, living at or near Kaipara proper, seldom raising more than is necessary for their own consumption.

The Natives at the Wairoa portion of the district are chiefly of the Ngapuhi Tribe—Parawhau and Rarawa hapus—and are almost constantly at work for the Europeans engaged in the timber trade, at which they earn considerable sums of money.

The Native schools in the Kaipara District are, on the whole, fairly attended; but many obstructions are still experienced by the teachers from the innate indolence and apathy of the parents as regards education. The appointment of a Maori matron at the Tanoa School, Otamatea, has materially increased the attendance—from fifteen to twenty scholars having lately been added to the school roll—thus verifying the recommendation made by Captain Symonds (the then Resident Magistrate) on a former occasion.

In conclusion, I would beg to remark that much gratification is felt by the European residents in the district at the friendly relations existing between themselves and the Native population, and which (notwithstanding any minor disputes that may occur between the races) I believe will long continue, and become more firmly cemented as time passes over.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,

JAMES S. CLENDON,
Clerk, R.M. Court, Kaipara.

No. 6.

Mr. G. T. WILKINSON, Native Agent, Thames, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Thames, 29th May, 1880.

I have the honor to forward herewith a report on Native affairs in the Thames District for term ending 31st March last, by E. W. Puckey, Esq.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE T. WILKINSON,
Native Agent.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 6.

Mr. E. W. PUCKEY, late Native Agent, Thames, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Thames, 29th May, 1880.

I have the honor, in compliance with your Circular No. 1, of the 16th March, 1880, to report as follows on Native affairs in the Thames District:—

Since the date of my last general report, the Pukehange outrage, of which you already possess the minutest details obtainable, took place. I regret to say that no favourable opportunity has yet occurred to arrest the perpetrators. The excitement consequent upon the act of shooting at a white man—the first, I believe, which has ever occurred at the Thames—has died out; but the members of the Ngatihako hapu more immediately connected with Epiha and Pakara, who own to having shot at young McWilliams, keep very much to themselves.

In November and December last a good deal of excitement was caused by the survey of a portion of Mr. Alley's property at Hikutaia, over which the Natives claim to have rights with which they never parted. I believe this question is likely at last to be settled.

In January last I had occasion to visit Coromandel in connection with the alteration of the telegraph line, as the Natives were troublesome and obstructive. It had been the intention to commence the new line from the Tiki, near Coromandel: as, however, a Native difficulty would in that case have to be faced at once, and the contractors were on the ground, I thought it would be better, as affording more time to deal with the question, to commence operations from the southern end of new line, where no difficulty existed. This was done, therefore, and the line successfully completed, the Natives owning the land over which the line passed gladly assisting at a fair rate of remuneration. I do not consider it necessary, in a general report, to go into the details of delicate negotiations.

A tragic occurrence took place about the same time (January) up the Piako River, at the late chief Tarapipipi's settlement. A man of the Ngatihako hapu, being jealous of his wife, killed her and then hung himself. I may add that the woman had laid an information against him about two weeks previously; but the Resident Magistrate was absent on official duties, and, as it was a Maori case, the Justices of the Peace could not deal with it. As it seemed highly probable that an amicable arrangement would be come to, and as the relations of both desired it, they were allowed to go to Piako, with the result before mentioned.

The chief Tukukino came to see the Hon. Mr. Rolleston at Paeroa with respect to the Komata Road difficulty, and for the first time, to my knowledge, gave a Minister his reason for his pertinacious

opposition; and I believe, as I have already informed the Government, that the road could be now made without a breach of the peace. I have reasons for making this statement which I do not feel called upon to make public.

The employment of the Natives upon the section of the Thames and Waikato Railway between Totara and Kirikiri—the portion which, by arrangement, they were to form—has been a failure, the price agreed upon being, in their estimation, too low; and I very much fear this will cause a difficulty, and the Government will have to pay a higher price per chain for such other land as they may require within the Thames District for the line.

Hotereni Taipari, the last of the old chiefs of Hauraki, died on the 20th March last. Since I took charge of Native affairs at the Thames in 1869, the following chiefs, all of the highest rank and prestige, have died: Te Taniwha, Taraia, Haora, Tipa, Tamati te Otatu, Rapana Maungaroa, Te Moana-nui, and, last, Hotereni Taipari. All these men had great influence for good, and inculcated friendliness to the pakeha during the younger days of the colony. I regret to say the younger men who have succeeded them do not seem to have the same influence for good; or, if they have, do not appear to exercise it.

The Natives in this district are, as a whole, very favourably disposed towards the Government at present in power. I think care should be taken lest they dispossess themselves of all their lands before it is too late. I may say this question perhaps may not assume so great importance at the Thames, as the most of the land they have sold has been purchased by the Government, and the best portions of the same so acquired have been reserved for them (the Natives). I think care should be taken also to reserve from the action of the Waste Lands Board suitable blocks of land for Native school purposes.

In giving effect to the policy of retrenchment, and more particularly in the case of Wata Tipa, I think the Government might have borne in mind the services rendered by his father, the late Haora Tipa. The saving of a few pounds (£30) should surely be of less moment than the tangible assurance that his father's services were recognized and appreciated. The young man bore the loss of his salary very well to outward appearance: slightly adapting the words of Job, he said, "The Government has given, and the Government has taken away: blessed be the name of the Government." I do not think, however, he meant the word "blessed" in its proper sense.

I will add in conclusion that, being one of the unfortunates myself, my services having been dispensed with, I have found it very dry work writing this report, and I have acceded to your request only because I thought it would be narrow-minded to have done otherwise.

I have, &c.,

E. W. PUCKEY,
Late Native Agent.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 7.

Mr. T. JACKSON, R.M., Papakura and Waiuku Districts, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Razorback, 13th May, 1880.

In compliance with instructions contained in your circular of the 16th March, 1880, I have the honor to report upon the state of the Natives in the Resident Magistrates' Districts of Papakura and Waiuku.

Since my last annual report no change of importance has taken place in the above districts.

The number of Native Assessors has been reduced by the death of Nini Potaua Kukutai, and the removal of Hori Tauroa.

Nini Potaua Kukutai died at Taupiri, Lower Waikato, on the 10th of December, 1879. He was a chief of the Ngatitipis, and a Native of some note. He was descended through the female line, but the fact of his being the elder man, and an Assessor, gave him the status in the tribe which he held. It was through his interference a short time since that the trig. station in his locality was not permitted to be erected. Hori Kukutai, his nephew, will probably represent the tribe, but, from his mind being affected, he will not have the influence he otherwise would.

Hori Tauroa, a chief of the Ngatiteatas was removed from his office on the 1st of November, 1879; leaving two Assessors in this district—Hori Kingi te Whetuki, of Maraetai, and Henare Kaihau, of Waiuku. The salary of the former has been reduced from £40 to £30 per annum.

The Native policemen have been reduced by the resignation of Rapata Tamihana, on the 30th of December, 1879, and the removal of Ihimera Ware, stationed at Waikato Heads, and Hemi Manu, stationed at Waiuku, on the 31st March, 1880—leaving one Native policeman in the district, stationed at Mercer.

The Natives during the past year have, upon the whole, been well-behaved, and no serious crime has been committed by any of the permanent residents. Two Natives have been convicted of larceny, both belonging to the Ngatumahutas—namely, Te Ropiha, who, on the 19th of June, 1875, stole, in this district, two horses, a saddle and bridle. He was arrested by the constable stationed at Mercer some days after the theft, and, on the same day, rescued by Natives who were present when the constable arrested him. He escaped to the King country. In November, 1879, coming into the Township of Alexandra with other Natives, the constable stationed there recognized and arrested him on the above charge. He was brought to Papakura, and committed to take his trial, found guilty, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. Te Ropiha was convicted of larceny in 1870, and, on that occasion, escaped out of the lock-up at Papakura by tearing up the floor of the cell in which he was confined. This Native holds some important office under Tawhiao. The other Native convicted of larceny was Manga te Teko, charged with stealing from Natives engaged in gum-digging: he was sentenced to one month's imprisonment.

There have been fewer Natives charged with drunkenness during the past year than in any previous year.

The high price of kauri gum has not only found employment for many Natives of both sexes residing in my district, but has attracted some two hundred from other parts. The cutting of flax finds employment for Natives living near the Waikato River; they contract to supply the mills at so much per ton. A few are employed by the day, but, as a rule, they prefer contract work.

The crops during the past year have in some parts been good, in others only middling. The Ngatitahingas living on the West Coast have had good crops; the Ngatimahos and others, settled in the neighbourhood of Mercer, have had indifferent ones, and in no case will they have any surplus for sale.

Owing to the large gathering of Natives to lament over the death of Nini Potaua Kukutai, at Taupiri, the Ngatitipas must have consumed most of their winter's stock. On the 5th April last some five hundred Natives were assembled; they consumed and divided 10 tons of flour, several tons of potatoes, and one hundred pigs, besides kumaras and fish. Major Te Wheoro was the principal chief present. He and Hori Kukutai spoke to the Natives, advising them strongly to remain quietly at their own settlement until interfered with by the pakehas or Natives, and not to listen to those who advised a contrary course. This was said in reference to the great desire the King party have shown—trying to persuade them all to remove and reside at Hikurangi, and to do so before the great flood comes. The Hauhaus present—about one hundred—did not speak in opposition to Major Te Wheoro and those on his side.

There are no Native schools in my district. The one opened at Waiuku some time ago has been closed, the Natives not showing any disposition to foster it. The public school at Mercer was partly built with money furnished by the Native Department, thinking that Native children near Mercer would attend: such has not been the case. A few attended for some time. At present there are no Native children attending the school.

The Natives have been tolerably healthy during the past year, and have not been afflicted with any epidemic.

A portion of the Ngatikahu and Ngatiamau hapus have lately returned to Te Onewhero, and have commenced cultivating crops for a permanent residence.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

THOMAS JACKSON, R.M.,
Papakura and Waiuku Districts.

No. 8.

Mr. H. W. BRABANT, R.M., Tauranga, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Tauranga, 15th May, 1880.

I have the honor to make, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, the following report on the state of the Natives in the Bay of Plenty:—

1. *Tauranga District.*

This district being now what may be termed a settled European one, there is little change to remark in the condition, habits, or behaviour of the Natives from year to year. They have this season had fair crops. They have not been visited by any epidemic disease, and I think the rate of mortality has been below the average. The Government Surgeon has given them medical advice free as usual, and hospital comforts have been accorded them when necessary. One chief has died, Hamiora Tu, who deserves a passing word, as during the time when all his tribe fought against us he remained loyal, and has from time to time done good service to Government. The Natives in this district have, during the past year, received from Government considerable sums in payment for purchased lands; but, I fear, owing to their neglecting their ordinary avocations to attend the Land Courts, and to their squandering the money when they get it, it has really done them but little good.

They appear to become year by year more amenable to the ordinary operations of the law. I may remark that during the last few months I have been able to carry through with but little opposition the survey of the Tauranga and Cambridge Road *via* Kaimai, a project which has been repeatedly tried before but opposed by the Natives. They are now willing to work on roads for the Government, and I hope that in reporting next year I may be able to mention works of this kind completed by them.

In the Police Court, Tauranga, there have been twenty charges brought against aboriginal natives during the past twelve months: of these, eighteen resulted in summary convictions. Two of these were for larceny, seven for assaults, four for drunkenness, and five for other offences. In the Resident Magistrate's Court Maoris were either plaintiffs or defendants in fourteen cases.

In the boarding establishment for the sons of Native chiefs at Tauranga, there are now twelve boys who attend the European district school, and most of whom are as advanced as Europeans of a similar age.

2. *Maketu District.*

I have visited Ohinemutu once a month during the past year, and Maketu several times. The Natives have not had such good crops as usual, and throughout the year have been badly off for food. This is no doubt owing in a measure through their having had to attend Land Courts, and given much of their time to discussing the subject of the disposal of these lands. The Resident Magistrate's Court sitting at Ohinemutu, and (more rarely) at Maketu, has had many Maori disputes before it during the past year. Seventeen civil cases were tried in which both plaintiff and defendant were Maoris, and eleven in which one party was a Maori and one a European. The Natives dealt with in the Police Court were—seven committed for trial for indictable offences; seven charged with assault (generally with assaulting another Native), two of whom were dismissed and the rest convicted; there were two convictions for larceny, and two for minor offences. Drunkenness, I think, is less common than formerly. The Natives have shown every disposition to submit to the decisions of the Court.

The "Great Native Committee" still sits at Ohinemutu, to hear land claims, but they get through but little business. The Natives in this district continue anxious to work on roads for the Government. They have performed a good deal of labour on the Rotorua and Tauranga Road, and the Rotorua and Maketu Road; they are also shortly to commence other works of a similar nature. The flour-mills at Te Ngae and Rotoiti have been put in repair, assisted to some extent with Government money. The Natives promise to put in large quantities of wheat this year, to grind in them: time will show whether they do so.

During the year a new school has been erected at Ohinemutu, at which over seventy Native children now attend, besides a few European. There are also five other Native schools in this district, which continue to afford the rudiments of education to a considerable number of the Native youth. I have visited each from time to time, and append for your information a tabular statement showing the attendance. I may mention that at each of these schools a supply of simple medicines has been placed by Government for the use of the Natives, and which provision is much valued by them.

3. Opotiki District.

I have visited the Opotiki District twice during the past year, but no question of importance has arisen to oblige me to go there more frequently. The Native population there continue exceptionally industrious and law-abiding.

The flour-mill belonging to the Ngatiawa Tribe at Whakatane, to the cost of which the Government contributed, is now nearly completed.

There are five Native schools now in operation in this district, including a new one at Waiotahi, and they continue to be well attended and successful.

In conclusion, Sir, I may remark that, except in matters affecting their lands, which still cause frequent quarrels, the Maoris in the Bay of Plenty now give but little trouble to Government. Crime is not unknown amongst them, but when detected it is punished by the ordinary laws, which are respected and supported by the bulk of the Native population.

I have, &c.,

HERBERT W. BRABANT, R.M.,

Native Officer, Bay of Plenty.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

NATIVE SCHOOLS, BAY OF PLENTY DISTRICT.

ABSTRACT showing ATTENDANCE from 1st July, 1879, to 31st March, 1880.

No.	Name of School.	No. on the Books.			Average Attendance.			Remarks.
		Sept. Qr.	Dec. Qr.	March Qr.	Sept. Qr.	Dec. Qr.	March Qr.	
1	Maketu	34	53	55	11	21	18	Eight European children included.
2	Matata	35	44	49	23	31	40	
3	Ohinemutu ... ..	...	...	80	...	...	40	Opened January, 1880.
4	Te Awahou	17	17	19	10	10	10	
5	Te Wairoa (Tarawera)	43	48	40	26	25	22	
6	Rotoiti	24	25	41	15	9	28	
7	Whakatane	47	38	26	23	19	13	Five European children included.
8	Waiotahi ... ..	...	22	28	...	16	20	Opened October, 1879.
9	Torere	35	30	29	22	23	25	
10	Omaio	30	29	30	26	25	26	
11	Te Kaha	29	25	25	19	19	19	
12	Native boarding-house attached to district school at Tauranga	12	12	10	10	11	9	
	Totals... ..	306	343	432	185	209	270	

No. 9.

Mr. R. S. BUSH, R.M., Opotiki, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Opotiki, 30th April, 1880.

In reply to your circular of March 16th, I have the honor to forward the usual annual report on Native matters in this district.

Condition of the Natives.

Since my arrival here, on the 22nd of February, I have visited nearly the whole of the Natives of the district, except the Urewera, at their own settlements. The Urewera I saw at the meeting held at Whakatane on Good Friday: nearly the whole of this tribe were present on that occasion, even those from Maungapowhatu and Waikaremoana. The object of the meeting was a discussion as to the ownership of a block of land called Raungaihe, situated between the Whakatane and Rangitaiki Rivers.

The Natives generally appear healthy and strong about Whakatane, Rangitaiki, Matata, and in the Urewera country; they have not been visited by any epidemic during the past year. The Torere, Te Kaha, and Raukokore Natives, however, have had a kind of low fever amongst them for the past two months, which has carried off a few of the children. Wiremu Kiingi has lost a daughter, and has a son who is not expected to live. These two children suffered from consumption. The Natives generally in this district are very much addicted to drink: this is the more apparent to me, as the Natives in the Kawhia and Raglan Districts were very sober. Were it not for the drunkenness of these Coast tribes, I feel sure they would be a wealthy section of their race.

Since I took over the magisterial duties of this district, I have had no reason to complain of the conduct of the Natives. Although at the time of the Native Land Court sittings here there were upwards of three hundred of them in the township during the whole of that time no Native was charged with drunkenness; but, after the decision of the Court was given, the party whose claim was not admitted caused a slight disturbance, which ended in two of the aggressors being brought before the Court. It is to be hoped next year I shall be in a position to report more favourably as to their drinking habits.

Disposition.

The whole of the tribes in this district, which extends from Whangaparoa to Maketu on the Coast, and the Urewera country in the interior, are at all times willing to abide by our laws, the Urewera alone excepted—they are still inclined to be lawless, but they now appear to be improving in this respect. The rugged nature of their country affords them security from arrest, and I have no doubt many of them are emboldened by this fact to act in defiance of our laws. However, so far they have conducted themselves very well, and I trust even this hitherto lawless tribe will ere long be amenable to our laws, the same as the majority of the Natives of the district appear to be. So far as I have been able to judge, it is apparent that these Natives prefer to be governed by our laws than their own. I conclude this from the frequent appeals they make to the various Courts throughout the district: almost every Court-day there are one or more Native cases at each place where the Court sits, and invariably the decision of the Court is obeyed by the party in fault.

There is one thing which I think it right to mention here, and that is the adherence of a majority of the Natives of this district to Te Kooti's form of Church service. Te Meihana, Wiremu Kingi, and other principal chiefs of this district object to the people using Kooti's *karakia*; but they will not listen to their chiefs. I do not think the mere fact of their adhering to this form of worship indicates any desire on their part to act with hostility against the Government of the country, but it is simply a belief that Kooti is something more than a human being. Many Natives have visited Kooti lately to consult him with respect to cases of sickness amongst them. Kooti is represented as telling them "that it was no use their coming to him, as he was no god, but only a human being the same as themselves." He, however, enjoined them to adhere to his form of worship. The whole of the Urewera adopt Kooti's *karakia*, but they of course were a part of his troops when he was fighting against us. They have never laid aside his prayers, &c.

Of the various forms of worship in vogue amongst the Natives, I am of opinion that next, to that of our own Church, Te Kooti's is by far the most sensible. That used by the Waikato King Natives is simply nonsense, and I am happy to state is not in vogue on this coast.

I have no doubt, like everything new amongst Natives, this Church service will be the rage for a short time, after which its adherents will gradually dwindle away. I am rather surprised that the Whakatane Natives have adopted this form of prayer, as their reminiscences of Te Kooti can be anything but happy.

Crops.

The crops generally are very good. The Te Kaha people are the only ones who have grown wheat to any extent this year. They sold to one storekeeper eight hundred pounds' worth, the price given being 5s. per bushel. The maize crop throughout the district looks very well. At every settlement there are large cultivations of this grain. If the growers were more thrifty in their habits, they would be well off; but I regret to say there is a very pernicious habit amongst Natives generally here of living on their crops before they are even planted; consequently, by the time the harvest comes in, they have nothing to receive, as in the case of the £800 paid for the wheat at Te Kaha. The Natives received none of this, because they had drawn to the full extent upon it. It is the same with their maize crop: one storekeeper alone told me he had due to him £800 on the incoming maize crop at the Kaha. It is this system of anticipation which keeps the Natives so poor: it is useless attempting to persuade them to act otherwise. A Maori has no thought for the morrow so long as he can gratify his wishes of to-day. Natives have frequently admitted to me that my advice was good, but it was impossible for them to act on it.

Kumaras throughout the district are an extra good crop this season.

Native Schools.

There are five Native schools in this district in which instruction is at present given; the remainder are closed. These schools are at Whakatane, Torere, Omaio, Te Kaha, and Waitotahi. The latter is upon a different footing from the four first-named. I took the opportunity, when visiting Torere, Omaio, and Te Kaha, to look in at the different schools. I managed to do so in each case when the children were at their lessons. They seemed to take considerable interest in their books. I will say nothing further about the schools, as the Inspector, who is now examining them, will no doubt render a full report on the subject, but that the three schools which I visited seemed to be carefully conducted. The children appeared quite delighted at my visit; and I am of opinion that, if these schools were visited by the local authorities whenever they might be in the neighbourhood, it would have a good effect on the scholars.

Public Works.

The only public works which have been carried on in this district during the past year are the road from Whakatane to Te Teko and a portion of Te Kaha and Raukokore Road.

The former is a road through the swamp which, when completed, will much shorten the distance to Te Teko. The Ngatipukeko Natives who are employed on this road are now cutting drains. When they have completed this they are to lay down 50 chains of fascines.

The Raukokore and Kaha Road was made by the Natives residing at those places. The cost of this work comes out of the grant to the Waikana Riding, County of Whakatane. The road is a decided improvement upon the old track, which was a dreadfully rough one. It must not be understood, because this is termed a road, that it is anything more than a 4-foot or 5-foot bridle-track.

Remarks.

I regret that, owing to my only just having taken over charge of this district, I am unable to write as interesting a report as I would like to have done. So far as I have seen of the Natives—and I think I may say I have seen the majority of them—I am inclined to think that they are as fair and tractable a portion of their race as I have had any dealings with, except perhaps the Urewera. The whole of these people are apparently men of peace, so far as we are concerned, although occasionally there are slight excitements taking place amongst themselves with respect to inter-tribal land boundaries. I have, however, had no difficulty at present in adjusting these differences, differences which are bound to occur throughout the country for years to come.

The Native officers who have been reduced and dispensed with have taken their reductions and dismissals in good part, without any grumbling. There are a few who reside about Rangitaiki and Kokohinau whom I have not seen since their reductions were intimated to them. I have, however, seen the majority of them.

Trusting that next year I shall be able to furnish a fuller and more interesting report than I have on this occasion,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

R. S. BUSH, R.M.

No. 10.

Mr. R. S. BUSH, R.M., Opotiki, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Opotiki, 27th April, 1880.

I have the honor to report for your information that I proceeded to the Kaha, Raukokore, and intermediate places on the 20th instant, returning from the same early on the 24th instant. At Omarumutu, Torere, Maraenui, Omaio, Te Kaha, and Raukokore, I found the Natives busily engaged harvesting their crops. At all these settlements the Natives appeared to have an excellent crop of kumaras. The maize crops at the different settlements looked well, and are extensive. One store-keeper at the Kaha alone has purchased from the Natives resident £800 worth of wheat this season, the price given being 5s. per bushel, which represents 3,800 bushels of wheat. Wheat does not seem to have been cultivated largely at either of the other places. The maize crops when sold will probably realize a great deal more than the wheat.

These Natives are not so well off as they might be, owing to their living on credit until the harvest comes in, when nearly the whole of their produce is taken up to pay their debts.

The Kaha people have been great drinkers of spirits, but I understand there is a decided improvement this year. These people in particular ought to be well off, if they were only more thrifty in their habits. They seem most industrious.

It is a pleasure to relate that along the whole Coast there does not seem to be any grievance of importance amongst the Natives. One or two, however, are a little troubled about some of the surveys now being carried on between the Motu River and Poverty Bay. The Kaha and Raukokore Natives have much improved the road from Te Kaha to the latter place: still, the road is a very rough one, and in the winter months will prove anything but a pleasant journey. There is apparently more sickness amongst these Natives than has been the case for some time, there being Natives ill at most of the settlements enumerated; the disease seems to be a kind of low fever.

Upon arrival at Torere on my way home, I found Wiremu Kingi's daughter had just died: she seems to have succumbed to consumption. Her death, however, was not unexpected, as she had been under medical treatment here for a considerable time.

This was my first visit to this portion of my district and my acquaintance with most of the Natives. From what I saw of them I am inclined to think that they are an average well-conducted section of the Native race. I trust upon further acquaintance I shall be able to incline to my present opinion of them. I would add that I am informed that at nearly all these settlements there are a few adherents to Te Kooti's form of prayer, but the majority of the Natives are of our religion.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

R. S. BUSH, R.M.

No. 11.

Captain PREECE, R.M., to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Napier, 12th May, 1880.

In accordance with the instructions contained in your circular of the 16th of March last, No. 1, I have the honor to forward, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, the following annual report on the state of the Natives in the Opotiki District:—

Industrial Pursuits.

The Natives in this district maintain their character for industry. During the spring of the year some Government land purchases were being negotiated; the Natives did not allow these matters to keep them from their work; they merely attended on the days the money was to be paid, and returned to their ordinary employment immediately after it was divided. At Whakatane the Ngatiawa

Tribe have erected a turbine-wheel flour-mill, at a cost of about £700. The Ngatipukeko have not yet succeeded in collecting sufficient funds to put up their proposed mill. The Rangitaike Natives have now a flock of eighteen hundred sheep, which are quite free from scab. These Natives send their wool home for sale, and do not even draw an advance on it. The last clip realized a high price.

Public Works.

The Natives have had very little employment on public works during the last year, the only work performed by them being a ditch to carry off the surface water from the Te Teko and Whakatane Road, and making a bridle-track on the surveyed line in the bad places of the road between Te Kaha and Raukokore: this has been done under my supervision in my capacity as distributor for the Waikana outlying district. The portion of the road which is completed is a great improvement on the old track, and has been done at a very small cost.

There is a very strong desire amongst the Natives of Ohiwa and Waiotahi for employment on roadwork. I would suggest that they should be given work during the summer months on the new inland road which has been laid out between Ohiwa and Opotiki.

Condition of the Natives.

The general conduct of the Natives continues to be very good. With regard to their moral condition, I cannot state that there is any perceptible improvement during the past year, but it is certainly not bad considering their communistic habits. The demoralizing effects of the late war are gradually wearing off. There has been a great deal of sickness amongst the Natives during the year. The Natives residing near Opotiki never ask for medical aid from Government, but go to the doctor in the same manner as Europeans, and I am informed that they pay for attendance cheerfully, and much more speedily than some Europeans. The Natives at Torere, Omaio, and Te Kaha obtain Government medicines, which are dispensed by the Native school teachers at their respective stations.

In the Resident Magistrate's Court the number of civil cases between Europeans and Maoris has been twenty-seven; between Natives, only twelve. I am happy to state that the number of criminal cases has decreased, there being only seventeen, including drunkenness, against sixty last year.

Native Schools.

The Te Kaha, Omaio, and Torere Schools continue to keep up a fair average attendance of scholars, who are progressing slowly, but I think in some instances very favourably. The Whakatane School, I am sorry to say, shows no improvement. The school opened by the Natives at Waiotahi is attended very well. Mr. Avent, the teacher, takes great interest in his duties, but he labours under disadvantages, having no proper schoolroom.

General Remarks.

The Ngatiawa Tribe, residing at Whakatane, made a present to the Government of a very handsome carved house named "Matatua," for the purpose of being sent to the Sydney Exhibition. This house was very highly prized by the Natives, each of the posts representing some ancestor of the tribe.

In conclusion, I may state that the Coast Natives of the Opotiki District are thoroughly law-abiding, and also that the Urewera are becoming more and more amenable to law. I have no difficulty now in serving the process of the Court in that part of the district. One of the members of this tribe, residing at Ruatoki, was summoned for a breach of the Licensing Act, and was fined £5 and costs; the fine was immediately paid.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE A. PREECE.

No. 12.

Captain GUDGEON, R.M., Gisborne, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Gisborne, 23rd April, 1880.

In accordance with your Circular No. 1, of the 16th March last, I have the honor to report as follows on the Natives in the East Coast District:—

The Maoris in this district and the Wairoa are still expecting visits from Te Kooti, who appears to exercise much power and influence among a great section of them, more especially in the Wairoa District. There are frequently reports circulated that he has taken to the bush; but it is not probable that they would join him in the event of his making a demonstration against the Europeans. Nevertheless their feeling towards us is not altogether satisfactory. Taniaionarangi, of Wairoa, it is stated, did debate the possibility of breaking into the arms-house at Te Kapu. The general report is that Te Kooti intends in due time to attack respectively Tauranga, the Thames, and Poverty Bay. There is little doubt as to his having expressed this intention, as the whole of his visitors agree on the subject.

A dispute which might have had serious consequences has arisen between the Aitanga-a-Mate, of Whareponga, and the Te Whanau-a-rua, two hapus of Ngatiporou, the subject of the quarrel being the ownership of a piece of land. The former hapu, to assert their right, buried a child of rank upon it, and, on the counter-claimants threatening to disinter it, Te Aitanga-a-mate seized their arms, and would have resented the outrage with death, had not the others desisted. Since then Ropata has persuaded the rival claimants to pass their land through the Court; but this contention may, however, break out at any moment, as there are still unsettled boundary disputes between them.

With reference to the Ngatiporou Tribe, I have much pleasure in reporting that they are showing every disposition to obey the law, as may be seen by the way in which every judgment of the Resident Magistrate's Court at Awanui has been carried out. The very men who gave the constables notice not to cross the boundary at Waiotahu have lately rendered every assistance to them; and, in a case of a breach of the Arms Act, not only did they hand over the guns, but proceeded to Auckland, and gave

evidence for the prosecution. The greatest chief of Ngatiporou, Te Hati Hokomau, was arrested on a warrant, and imprisoned for two months, without the slightest opposition from his people by whom he was surrounded.

In regard to roads and trig. stations the Ngatiporou are not so easy to manage, one or two obstructive old chiefs being principally instrumental in this—notably Hamiora te Manunui, who at one time was an assessor, but was struck off pay owing to his action in destroying trig. stations on a former occasion, and who is now repaying the Government in kind by obstructing the inland Waiapu road and preventing the erection of trig. stations.

Delay and trouble have arisen in the matter of both Government and private surveys in the Waiapu District through the non-appointment of a District Officer under the Native Lands Act, whose duty it would be to inquire into boundaries, title, &c., of each block before the surveyors commence operations. In many cases the first intimation that a section of the owners receive of sale or negotiation is the entry of the surveyors on the land, no previous inquiry having been made as to right or *bona fides* of vendors, so that, in these cases, the counter-claimants have invariably refused to allow the survey to proceed: hence a serious loss of time and money to the surveyors, the only innocent parties in the matter. A dispute has lately arisen in the Waiapu District for these reasons. Not unfrequently opposition to a survey will arise from the length of time allowed to elapse between the first payment and the entry of surveyors; in these cases the money has been spent, and those who have received it, with a view to future benefits, have instigated other sections of the tribe to oppose the sale.

I regret I cannot report satisfactorily of the health of the Natives. During the months of August and September, 1879, a very large number of deaths occurred among the Ngatiporou, principally, in the cases of children, from whooping-cough, and in adults from fever of an enteric type. These deaths have been variously estimated at from 70 to 150, but perhaps 100 would not exceed the actual loss. Fever is still prevalent among the tribes, though latterly of a milder form. This mortality has doubtless been caused by insufficient food, consequent on the failure of the potato crop of last season; and I have every reason to anticipate further sickness and death, inasmuch as the heavy rains of the last two months have almost entirely destroyed the kumara crops, and as they simply plant enough for a bare subsistence, putting their trust in Providence that each year will be a successful one, they will be for some considerable time without good food.

I have, &c.,

W. E. GUDGEON, R.M.,

Native Officer.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 13.

Mr. E. BAKER, R.M., Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, 15th May, 1880.

In compliance with Circular No. 1, of 16th March, I have the honor to forward my annual report upon the state of the Natives in this district.

I arrived at Wairoa in August last year, and lost no time in visiting the principal Native settlements, and making the acquaintance of the chiefs. I was everywhere received in a most cordial manner, and I am happy to be able to state that the greatest good feeling exists in this district between the Natives and Europeans.

There is only one Native school in the district, and even this is but poorly attended. I have been at considerable pains to try and induce the Natives at Mohaka, Ramoto, Ruataniwha, and other settlements to convey pieces of land to the Government as sites for schools, but as yet have met with only partial success, the Natives apparently either not recognizing the importance of education, or else not being satisfied with the progress made by the children who attend the solitary school above mentioned. A few Native children from Wairoa are sent to the Mission schools at Te Aute and Napier, and seem to derive much benefit therefrom.

There has been an average amount of sickness during the past year, but not a few of the deaths have mainly occurred through the patients being badly looked after. Dr. Ormond, the medical officer of this district, having resigned, the Natives are now without a medical attendant.

Neat little wooden churches have been erected by the Natives at Ramoto, Te Hatepe, Nuhaka, and Mohaka entirely at their own expense. They are well attended, services being held every day. Since my arrival here the Rev. J. S. Hill, of the Church Missionary Society, has been appointed to the charge of the Natives.

There are a few misguided followers of what is called Te Kooti's religion, but they are hardly worth noticing, and are held in contempt by all the other Natives.

I would desire to call the attention of the Government to the fact that each small kainga in this district has its *komiti*, and that most Native cases are tried by this tribunal. In most instances the fines inflicted are paid into some supposed church fund, and, where money is not obtainable, horses are taken in lieu thereof. In several instances the decision of the *komiti* has been objected to, and appeals have been made to the Resident Magistrate's Court. Actual crime is almost unknown; a few cases of drunkenness, furious riding, &c., have been dealt with by me, and in all cases the fines immediately paid.

There has been some talk of having a flour-mill erected, but the amount of wheat raised at present is not sufficient to render such an undertaking remunerative. Maize is the main crop grown, for which a good price is obtained from the European storekeepers, to whom, however, the Natives are deeply in debt. The maize crop this year has been most abundant.

I have already reported upon the Nuhaka-Whakaki disturbance.

I have, &c.,

E. BAKER, R.M.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 14.

Captain PREECE, Napier, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Napier, 20th May, 1880.

In accordance with the instructions contained in your Circular No. 1, of the 15th of March last, I have the honor to forward the following report on the state of the Natives in this district:—

There seems to be a growing desire among the Natives to have their lands which have passed through the Court subdivided. I think this is a step in the right direction, and I would suggest that full powers be given to the Court to subdivide Native lands whether under lease or still in the hands of the Natives.

A new religion has been promulgated by a Native named Paora Potangaroa, from Wairarapa. A number of the Porongahau and Waipawa Natives have become disciples of the said Paora, who professes to have supernatural powers. I fear that this fanaticism will upset the minds of some of the Natives for a time, but I do not anticipate any evil consequences will arise therefrom. Natives are always too prone to believe in any new doctrine which causes excitement. Tareha and the principal chiefs have set their faces against it, and I think it is quite probable that this will give it a check, although there are sure to be some who will join the new faith from their love of opposition.

Te Wairoa.

A dispute arose between the Rakaipaka, of Nuhaka, and the Ngatihine Tribe, of Whakaki, relative to a piece of land situated between Whakaki and Tahaenui. This threatened to become a serious matter, and shots were exchanged between the parties: the matter was, however, settled for the present by the intervention of Henare Tomoana, M.H.R., who went from here for the purpose of arranging the question between the contending tribes.

I am sorry to say that the Wairoa Natives do not cultivate so much as they used to do in former years.

In conclusion, I may state that my report is necessarily short owing to my having only been in charge of the district since the middle of March last.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE A. PREECE.

No. 15.

MR. E. S. MAUNSELL, Wairarapa, to the HON. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Greytown, Wairarapa, 23rd April, 1880.

I have the honor to report that the state of the Natives in this district is, as it has hitherto been, friendly toward Europeans, and that they are submissive to law and authority.

For many years past some have complained of the non-issue of Crown grants, others of non-fulfilled past promises of the Government, of the non-settlement of disputed boundaries between their lands, and lands ceded to the Crown without tribal authority. These subjects are being inquired into with a view to a fair adjustment.

Their attention is principally occupied by land disputes and social questions, which they inquire into and decide at meetings held periodically. These meetings are styled "committees"—constituted of no particular members, but of those who choose to meet on these occasions. Their decisions are invariably accepted, and fines imposed are paid to the aggrieved persons. Recently a committee decided against a man for eloping with another's wife, and fined him £50, which was paid by cheque upon a bank to the injured husband, the wife forfeiting also her horses to him. After having disbursed the liability under this dictum, they departed, and now live together and are recognized as husband and wife, the discarded and former husband being satisfied with the exchange. Instances of similar acts of the committee and its influence are of frequent occurrence.

Very little interest is evinced regarding the proceedings of Te Whiti or the King party at Waikato.

There is a marked improvement in the social and moral state of the Natives of the district. Hauhauism has been abandoned, and at several kaingas they are reviving Christian worship formerly abandoned for Hauhauism. Their leading men take great interest in the proceedings of Parliament, so far as questions affecting their race are concerned.

A strong objection still pervades their minds against the Native Land Court as a means of acquiring land titles, the process being vexatious and incomprehensible to them. They have on many occasions of sittings of the Court withdrawn their applications for investigations through this objection, and in anticipation of a more simple tribunal being substituted. Even now, Natives withhold their land from the operation of the Native Land Acts, except in cases of claims to succeed deceased grantees, and of disputed titles forced into Court by one party having animosity towards the other, and of mercenary motives, when sullenness and indisposition to allow the hearing to proceed on the objecting side result.

Mortality during the past year has not been in the same ratio of previous years, the only deaths being those of three or four old persons.

I have noticed children at their kaingas running about in a wild condition, the parents entirely indifferent to their state or education. I may mention that in very few cases Natives avail themselves of the advantages of having their children taught at the public schools. At Gladstone two or three attend the school; at Greytown the same.

In conclusion, I beg to state that the Natives, generally, in this district are slowly emerging from a state of political and social corruption, caused primarily by the King movement, and latterly by the Hauhau infatuation. During the years they were in that state they were decimated by death through exposure and want, and joining in the past wars. Out of a population of about 1,000 fourteen years

ago, they do not now, I estimate, exceed 650 souls. In proportion to the European population they are in a minority of about one to fourteen. They know and express their comparative weakness. The bluster and domineering address of the past has subsided in proportion to their numerical decrease.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

E. S. MAUNSELL.

No. 16.

Mr. R. WARD, R.M., Marton, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Marton, 11th May, 1880.

In compliance with your circular letter of the 16th March last, I have the honor to make my annual report on the state of the Natives in my district. In doing so, I am glad to be able to say that the general conduct of the Natives throughout the district during the past year has been satisfactory. They have now settled down quietly to work on their farms or kaingas, or for their European neighbours; the many disturbing questions as to land are now settled, and, on the whole, their condition and good conduct afford a pleasing contrast to what it was some years ago.

The leading and thoughtful members of the tribes seem fully alive to the baleful effects of excessive indulgence in alcoholic liquors, and are everywhere making a brave stand against placing temptation of that sort before their people.

I find nearly all offences of a social or minor character are tried, and when thought necessary punished, by their own runangas. It is quite a rare occurrence to have a purely Native minor criminal case in my Court.

In February last a jubilee meeting was held at Otaki to commemorate the introduction of the Gospel among the Maoris of New Zealand. The meeting was presided over by his Lordship the Anglican Bishop of Wellington, other clergymen (European as well as Native) assisting in the interesting services held in connection therewith. A handsome pillar, some forty feet high, was erected to mark the event. I regret I was unable to be present at this meeting. I understand there was a great gathering of Natives, and everything passed off satisfactorily. I had omitted to state that, at the time of this meeting, the marble statue of Te Rauparaha (quite the Napoleon of his time, on this coast), which was placed near the pillar referred to, was unveiled.

A considerable portion of the inland road between Foxton and Otaki is being made by Native labour, many of whom have taken contracts from the Manawatu County Council, and I believe are carrying them out satisfactorily.

Some months ago, in consequence of a misunderstanding between the Foxton ferryman and Natives living on the south bank of the Manawatu River, the latter determined to stop the road over their land between the said ferry and the sea-beach. Finding that the travelling public would be much inconvenienced by this, they decided to permit travellers to pass on paying a slight toll, which, for the present, is being levied. The Manawatu County Council is, however, now taking steps to survey and lay off a public road through this land (which, by the way, has not been passed through the Native Land Court) under the provisions of "The Public Works Act, 1876." The several sections of this Act having been explained to the Natives, they have decided to give the surveyors and Council every facility in doing what is necessary by law to cause the land to be taken over for road purposes, and will avail themselves of the compensation clauses of the Act for any loss they may sustain for land so taken. As a rule, the Natives manifest very little, if any, interest in the sayings and doings of Te Whiti and his people at Parihaka: they have no sympathy with him.

I cannot conclude my report without acknowledging the valuable, prompt, and painstaking assistance I have received from Mr. S. M. Baker, interpreter of my Court at Foxton, in the many meetings and communications I have had with the Natives of my district during the past year.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

ROBERT WARD, R.M.

No. 17.

Mr. R. W. WOON, R.M., Wanganui, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Wanganui, 22nd May, 1880.

I have the honor, in accordance with your circular, to submit, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, the following report on the state of the Native population in the Upper Wanganui River District:—

The Native feeling has not undergone much change since this time last year, although, from a variety of influences, and from the fickleness of the Native mind, it more or less varies. The Native being of an observant, inquiring, and impressionable character, his opinions are more or less affected by what is going on in the outside world, particularly as he is in an unsettled state, and is for ever casting about him to conserve his interests and better his condition. The great works and undertakings and rapid progress made by his European neighbours are a startling matter to him, and ever and anon he manifests his astonishment in words expressive of wonder and amazement at the power and skill of the white man. The public works and undertakings of the Government during recent years have not been without their effect upon the Maori mind; and, combined with our military power, as displayed during the late war, have had a pacificatory influence upon the Natives, who thereby have become convinced of their impotence to contend in arms with so redoubtable a foe as the English. They are much struck with the benefit resulting from the introduction of railways and the telegraph-wire, and are quite alive to the advantages derivable from their use, and spend no little money in travelling by train and *patuing* the wire.

The feeling of friendship as between the two races may be considered as established in these parts, and there is more danger of the Maoris disagreeing amongst themselves over land disputes than picking a quarrel with their white neighbours, against whom they have no real grievance.

As to crime, it is very seldom that a Native is charged with a serious offence before the Courts; and, generally speaking, there is no difficulty in bringing those to justice who break the laws of the country. In the manslaughter case referred to in my last report, the offending Maori duly surrendered to his bail, and was tried and acquitted at the Supreme Court. The Natives were much concerned and alarmed at the unfortunate issue of the *fracas*, which may or may not have hastened the death of a European; and the investigation and trial, though resulting in the acquittal of the accused, has had a salutary effect, more particularly upon the Maori youths who were mixed up in the drunken brawl. In my own Court the Maori cases have lately for the most part been of a civil nature; and in one instance, where a charge of sheep-stealing was made by a Maori against another, the case fell through for want of evidence of felonious intent on the part of the accused.

As pointed out by me in former reports, the land question is the all-absorbing business of the Maori at the present time. During the past summer the whole river population has been scattered here and there, engaged in, and watching over, the surveys of the many blocks under negotiation for sale to the Government. In only one instance (excepting the Murimotu dispute) was there any danger of the peace being disturbed, and that was over the Mangaturuturu survey, which was opposed by the Patutokotoko Tribe, who disputed the claim set up by Kemp and the Ranana Natives to the block, and assembled in force, with arms, to resist the survey, which had in consequence to be withdrawn. This tribe, who showed a disposition to resist the survey by a resort to violence, is the most warlike and independent one on the river, and lives at Manganui-o-te-Ao, a mountainous and inaccessible part of the country. Under the leadership of Pehi Turoa, Maketu, and other fighting chiefs, they formerly made a raid upon the river population, and conquered most of the inland tribes, and even established themselves in the neighbourhood of Wanganui Town, and finally crossed swords with Her Majesty's troops in the war of 1847, when Maketu, one of their warrior-leaders, met with his death from a soldier's bullet in a house near Churton's Creek. They fought against us during the late war, and have become much reduced in numbers; and most of their leading chiefs, including Pehi and Tahana Turoa, have died. They are becoming gradually more tractable, and, as they are peaceably disposed towards us, will soon become more manageable. As a tribe they are divided in opinion on the question of land-selling, and the title to much of their country is in dispute amongst themselves. A portion of their territory, bordering towards Taupo and Tongariro, is open fern land, and accessible from the interior.

I will here take occasion of referring to the late Murimotu disturbance, which at one time threatened to result in hostilities between the Wanganui and Ngatuihiti Tribes. There can be no doubt that the question of title to the land in that part of the country is very much in dispute—both tribal, family, and individual title. During the many years I have been in Wanganui, I have always understood it to be a debatable subject, both amongst resident and non-resident Natives; and it would be a good thing if the various claimants could agree to some concerted line of action, whereby the vexed question of title might be gone into, and settled by joint survey and investigation before the Land Court. Matters have now become somewhat complicated, owing to the lawless procedure of Major Keopa, late Assistant Land Purchase Officer, whose conduct throughout the whole affair cannot be justified. The example shown by him and his tribe, in taking up arms to enforce their supposed rights, will have a very bad effect upon the Natives generally, particularly from such an example being shown them by so distinguished and loyal a chief as Major Kemp had proved himself to be. His disobedience of orders and unruly conduct were quite inexcusable, and every opportunity was afforded him for explaining such conduct before the extreme step was taken of dismissing him. As an old friend of Major Kemp's, I must admit that the Hon. the Native Minister showed him every forbearance, and that it was his obstinate disobedience of orders and turbulent conduct that led to his dismissal. I have but one word of advice to give him should we meet again, and that is, to make his peace with the Government, whom he calls his parent, and return to his allegiance. I sincerely hope he will not persist in his enmity to the Crown, and that the report of his intention of severing himself from the Europeans—closing the river, stopping all surveys, selling and leasing of land, and attendance upon the Land Courts—will prove to be false and without foundation. With regard to Major Kemp's excuse for his conduct—that he was misled and deceived by his brother officers of the Land Purchase Department, and about counter-orders, &c.—that is a matter beyond my province to discuss. In any case, his first and paramount duty was to obey his chief; and, as a Militia officer of the colony, he must have known full well that that was the right and proper course to follow. I can conscientiously say that I did all I could to persuade Kemp to come away from Murimotu, and seek a friendly interview with the Hon. the Native Minister, so that matters might be made up; but he would not be advised, and I feel quite sure he will before long find out his mistake, and regret he did not listen to the counsel of an old friend. From what I have heard, I have reason to believe that Major Kemp is advising his people to withdraw their lands from the Native Land Court, and rest satisfied with Maori tenure as derived from their ancestors; to cease from selling and leasing, and to go in extensively for utilizing their lands by clearing and laying them down in grass, and putting stock of their own upon them; and, notwithstanding the invitation of Mete Kingi (who does not hold such extreme views as Kemp in this matter) to his people to take up their quarters, and attend the approaching sitting of the Land Court at, and in the immediate vicinity of, Te Paku meeting-house, Putiki, I am afraid many of the Wanganui Natives will fail to put in an appearance at the Court. Kemp has also, without sufficient reason, asked for the sitting of the Court to be put off; and, without explanation, his motive for making such request is open to suspicion.

The Native mind has all along, and still continues to be, much exercised upon the question of how to administer their land in such manner as to best promote their interests as a people. Opinion is much divided on the question. Some are for shutting up and monopolizing their lands altogether; some are for selling portions thereof, so as to let in the European element; and others—the extravagant and reckless—would part with every acre they have. Neither of said extremes will answer;

and I have all along advised them to sell portions of their surplus lands, and retain *in perpetuo* ample and goodly portions thereof for themselves and their posterity, feeling sure that by such policy the interests of both races will be permanently secured. Failing this, one or other of the extreme plans is bound to be adopted, to the injury and loss of all parties. In any case, as time rolls on, the rising generation of Maoridom are not likely to allow their ample domains to remain in the wilderness state, but will be only too ready to dispose of a large part thereof, so as to let in the advancing tide of European settlement and improvement, whereby they may, if they take the right course, raise themselves in the scale of civilization, and become an independent and well-to-do race. The sooner the Maori makes up his mind to adopt this course the better for him, for the want of some definite plan of action in this business keeps them most unsettled, and leads to much loss of time and dissipation of means through the agitation kept up on this all-absorbing topic, which, in a manner not satisfactory, vents itself at the frequent meetings held all over the country to discuss this burning subject.

In the matter of surveys and ascertainment of title, much delay is caused by the want of unanimity upon the question of a speedy reference of their land disputes to the duly-constituted Courts of the colony, whereby the matter of title might for ever be set at rest, and the boundaries and measurements of their tribal and family lands be duly recorded, and a step in advance obtained, whereby their individual claims might thereafter more easily and speedily be defined, and the two races would hold their lands upon the same tenure. The sooner the Maori awakes to the fact that it will be salvation to his race to once and for ever give up the habits and customs of his forefathers, and amalgamate with and adopt the manners and customs of the English, the better will it prove for him and his European neighbours, who will be only too happy to live in peace and quietness with the Maori race in the same country and under one rule. The Act gives every facility for the speedy survey of Maori lands, and the terms made by Government thereupon are most reasonable, and any delay that arises is the fault of the Natives.

With reference to the sittings of the Native Land Court at Wanganui, the up-river tribes are most desirous that they should be held at some settlement on the river, away from the town and the public-houses. As far as the local tribes are concerned, it would add much to their convenience and comfort were the Court to sit in their midst, where they could more easily and more cheaply procure food, and obtain house accommodation. Last year the Court sat at Putiki, in Mete's large meeting-house, and he has invited all the river population to take up their quarters there, away from town, next June; and I trust that the Natives will accept the invitation, and locate themselves where they will find ample room and some shelter from the winter's cold and rain.

With regard to the moral and physical condition of the Natives, I cannot report favourably. Their morals are not likely to improve as long as they adhere to their communistic habits, and live in the unsettled way they do. Their continued adherence to the habits and customs of their progenitors keeps them back, and hinders them from adopting the more refined manners of the European race. Advice and example are alike lost upon them, and now the increased desire for strong drink has made things worse, and has rendered them careless and unconcerned about a matter so vital to their best interests. Any step in advance would prove their salvation, and help to perpetuate the race.

In religious matters they cannot be expected to make any progress, seeing that the river population is now deprived of the regular visits of an English missionary, whose example, admonitions, and instructions would be some check upon them, and encourage those of them who try to do their duty to persevere in the right way and lead others to do better. Like many of us, they are but Christians in name and outward profession, and have lost their zeal and earnestness in a cause which alone, if faithfully adhered to, would promote their highest interests in this life and the life to come.

There can be no doubt that the Wanganui River is a neglected mission-field, and a great responsibility devolves upon the Church Mission Society for not taking it up and supplying a zealous, able, and active missionary to take charge of and instruct a Maori population of some 2,000, occupying the many settlements of this noble river.

Physically, the Maori degenerates, owing to his partial adoption of our food and clothing, and from the increased exposure (the origin of disease) he is subjected to in his frequent visits to town and other parts of the country. When travelling on the river, and squatting on the town foreshore, a calico tent is his only shade and protection from the sun and rain, including the high winds prevailing near the sea, from which he is well sheltered amongst the hills and valleys in the inland districts. The runanga-house and wharepuni is also a main cause of their ailments; for, from their prolonged stay in its poisoned and heated atmosphere, and sudden exposure outside to the cold, the use of such dwellings is consequently a prolific source of disease. The diet also militates against their physical development; for if they partook of less pork and potatoes, and used more bread and milk and butter, with beef and mutton occasionally, their bodies would derive more nourishment, particularly the children, many of whom die for want of proper food.

They have plenty of cattle, and have good mills to grind their wheat; but they are too lazy and indolent to milk their cows regularly, and have ceased to grow enough wheat for their own consumption, preferring to buy flour in town for occasional use. The system of gorging at their many Maori feasts, and subsequent scarcity of food, is another means of weakening and impoverishing their bodily frames.

Owing to these and other causes, there can be no doubt that the Maoris are fast decreasing in numbers. The number of births, as recorded, does not exceed that of deaths, and many infants are born and shortly after die, of which no account is given; the Natives showing much reluctance to give full information on this subject, as they are painfully aware of the fact that they are fast dying out, and that we, who are correspondingly increasing, shall soon possess the land.

In reference to agricultural pursuits, no more crops have been raised than necessary for the support of life, and more fruit was brought to town for sale than any other crop. The wheat that has been ground was from old corn-stacks, threshed out this summer; and, whilst the present agitation about their land continues, there will be little if any grain crops raised this season.

The Natives are now turning their attention to the depasturing of sheep and cattle, and much of the hillside bordering on the river has been cleared and laid down in grass as food for their increasing flocks,

to which they are constantly adding, by fresh purchases from Wanganui and neighbourhood. A good deal of wool has been sent to town from Ranana and the other river settlements, and disposed of, for the most part in the grease, at market prices. Woolsheds, pens, and sheep-washes are being constructed, and European labour employed.

I am not aware that any inspection has been made of the up-river flocks, and I am constantly urging upon the Natives the necessity of their having an early inspection, by a Sheep Inspector, of all their sheep, with a view of their obtaining clean certificates, and taking steps, if necessary, to have their sheep washed, so as to prevent the breaking out of scab, which would be a serious matter to them and adjoining European flockowners—on the principle of prevention being “better than cure.” The sooner this is done the better, and, considering the importance of the business, I would recommend the Sheep Inspector here being instructed to make an early visit to the up-river settlements, to enforce the tax, and report upon the state of the Maori flocks; there being one (varying in number from 400 to 2,000 sheep) at each of the seven main settlements from town to Utapu, a distance of 90 miles.

In the matter of public works, the Murimotu Road has at last been commenced, and Mr. Field's line adopted. The Natives are unanimous in giving the preference to this line, and have subscribed a sum of £36 10s. towards its cost, to be followed by further subscriptions, and assistance in labour, if required. The money, by the advice of the Hon. the Native Minister, was paid to the Treasurer of the County Council, and the Chairman acknowledged the receipt thereof in complimentary and grateful terms. Too great importance cannot be placed on this undertaking, as the road in question will unlock the vast interior, from whence the natural outlet will be the Wanganui Harbour. On the success of these two important works—the main road to Murimotu, Taupo, and Tuhua Districts, and the deepening and improvement of river and harbour—depend the rapid advancement and future importance of Wanganui.

The material used in the harbour works is being quarried out of Maori lands on the bank of the river, some twelve miles from the port. There seems to be an inexhaustible supply of good stone at the works, and the operations there carried on attract the wondrous gaze of the Maoris paddling up and down the river; leading to the frequent exclamation, “Te mahi a te pakeha!” (the wonderful work of the white man!) As already stated, works of this kind greatly strike the Maori mind, and give him a most exalted idea of our knowledge, skill, and power as a nation.

In matters of colonial interest, I might mention the continued absence of the population from the lower-river pas and higher up, numbering some 150 souls, at Parihaka. A few of them keep going to and fro; but the larger portion remain at Parihaka, awaiting the fulfilment of the prophecies of Te Whiti. Notwithstanding the non-realization of his many prognostications, they still seem to believe in him, and accept his teachings as inspired, and certain of accomplishment. However, one would think that the patience of his adherents will soon be exhausted, and that even his staunchest supporters will, before long, lose all faith in him, and turn round upon him and persecute him to the death! Notwithstanding a few ugly rumours to the contrary, the universal saying is that Te Whiti discountenances all resort to “carnal weapons,” and that there is to be no more fighting. Judging from recent events, and the result of the firm but conciliatory policy of the Government towards these people, we may look hopefully to the future, and expect that ere long the West Coast Maori difficulty will be a thing of the past.

The Maori schools, I regret to say, continue closed, and there seems no immediate likelihood of their being reopened. The attempt made by Father Pertius to start a Church boarding-school at Iruharama, in the village schoolhouse, proved a complete failure, and the work had to be abandoned, and the missionary removed to the Middle Island. One of the Native boys from this school is seeking after further instruction in the State school at Greytown, and another has entered a lawyer's office in this town; so that the village school system at Wanganui has been attended with this small, though satisfactory, result.

It is not that the Wanganui Natives cannot see the value of education, but the failure of the schools is owing, in a great measure, to the want of authority of the parents over their children, and the distracting and unsettling influence of the late land-selling movement over the whole river population, causing them to move about from locality to locality in a state of feverish excitement, to watch their interests in the soil.

I would here mention the fact that a college for Maori girls, endowed by Henry Churton, Esq., situate at Aramoho, a few miles from town, will be opened next month, and it is to be hoped it will prove a success.

Of the moneys invested by the land sellers last year, over £3,000 still remains in the New Zealand Bank at interest, but at reduced rates. I am not sanguine that said money will be left much longer at the bank, as over £1,000 has been withdrawn and spent; and I am afraid that ere long the balance will vanish in like manner. The Maoris are an improvident race, and it will take time to teach them habits of economy and thrift. In fact, they have hitherto obtained money so easily that they have yet to learn its value.

Owing to the trouble and expense of curing, the cultivation of hops and tobacco has been given up, and the vines have been allowed to run wild.

Silkworms have been supplied to the Tuhua Natives, who have an extensive mulberry plantation, and next season, in all probability, a good few cocoons will be brought to town for sale. If the producers meet with a ready and profitable market for the same in Wanganui, they will be encouraged to persevere in the industry of sericulture; otherwise they will abandon the enterprise.

I believe, some day, all these important industries will be pursued with profit up the Wanganui River; than which locality no finer field could be found for fostering and developing these important branches of agriculture.

With reference to the reductions lately made in the Native expenditure, by the dismissal of some of the assessors and police, and the cutting-down of the salaries of others, the payees, as a whole, have made no outcry, and have submitted to the inevitable with a good grace, seeing that the circumstances of the colony demand strict economy in Native and all other expenditure. The reductions were made in such manner as to give no offence to the sufferers, each of whom was written to from the Native Office and duly informed of the reason for the reductions made.

The Native expenditure will shortly be further reduced here by the decease of several of the old chiefs, who cannot, in the course of nature, be expected to survive much longer; and, though it would be unnatural to wish their speedy removal from earth on the score of economy, yet it will hereafter be consolatory to know that in their last days they continued to enjoy the favour and support of a paternal Government.

The restrictions as to supply to Natives of ammunition for sporting purposes, and which have been strictly enforced here of late, do not seem to have borne hardly on the Maori population, judging from the few complaints and remonstrances made, the Natives well understanding the reason actuating the Government in this matter. Two months of the sporting season have nearly passed, and I have ventured to recommend but two or three chiefs for the indulgence. The repair and sale of arms has likewise been kept under severe restriction, and the law relaxed in very few cases, and upon strong recommendation and cause shown. The necessity for keeping up the restriction lies more in the danger (were the same relaxed) of the Maoris procuring large quantities of ammunition, which would make them more ready to settle some of their land quarrels by a resort to arms than they otherwise would. The likelihood of their picking a quarrel with us is more remote, although in that case the danger would be increased could they get a ready and abundant supply of arms and ammunition.

I might here mention the fact that an obstruction to the free navigation of the Wanganui River exists, in the shape of a blockade against European travellers, at a place called Puketapu, about one hundred miles from town, at the mouth of the Taangarakau, an affluent of the Wanganui, and where there are extensive coal-beds. The object of such embargo is to prevent the exploration of the country by gold-prospectors, and as a check to the sale of land. The prime movers are Hoani Pehi and Te Hai—the latter a most obstinate and pig-headed fellow, who turned me back once, because I had some European gentlemen with me who were taking a holiday and desirous of seeing and admiring the magnificent forest scenery of the Upper Wanganui District. The Tribes Ngatiruru and others in the neighbourhood are parties to this obstruction, and, if they persist in their unfriendly and short-sighted policy, they deserve to be made to suffer, by being forbidden an approach to town to sell their produce and purchase European commodities. Only quite lately the said Te Hai turned back a European carpenter, who was being taken up to the Tuhua country by one of Mamaku's Natives to build a house for him, deprived him of his tools, and coolly wrote to me to pay the Natives who brought him down £5.

Hoping that this report may meet with the approval of the Hon. the Native Minister,
I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

RICHARD W. WOON, R.M.

No. 18.

Major BROWN, Civil Commissioner, New Plymouth, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.
SIR,—

New Plymouth, 18th May, 1880.

My annual report upon the state of the Natives of my district is, from the circumstances of the case, very brief.

The influence of Te Whiti over the Natives in the interests of peace, and, as he conceives, in their own interests, has continued to increase, and he has brought many Natives within his influence who were only half-hearted twelve months back. It appears to me that he is at the pinnacle of his power over the mind of the Natives from the White Cliffs to the Patea River inclusive; and that any day, or monthly meeting, may see the collapse of Te Whiti and his influence.

The course of action he still counsels, to be opposed to the carrying-out of the confiscation, is one of obstructiveness, unaccompanied by violence, and that may avoid any serious results to the Natives, so far as he can see. He is, I believe, guided to some extent by information and advice from his leading countrymen and their advisers in Wellington. But, as he will not submit to be entirely guided by it, it is not at all unlikely that he may direct steps to be taken that may land him and his people in breaches of the law, for which they will be held responsible.

He still exercises his influence to prevent any recourse to arms; but it is of course possible now, as it always is, that some Native may, on personal or tribal grounds, take vengeance on a European; the peculiar difficulty at the present time being that Te Whiti, as in the case of Hiroki, would feel obliged to afford protection to the murderer, to secure his own position and influence with the Natives. At the same time, there is an atmosphere of stagnation pervading Te Whiti's people, no doubt very much influenced by the removal of so many able-bodied men as prisoners to the Middle Island, and whose absence is visibly obvious in many ways, and at the present time is a great guarantee of inaction as regards any violent course being adopted. There has been a heavy mortality in the past twelve months, and, including the previous twelve months, I estimate the decrease in the number of Natives in my district since the census of 1878 will reduce the number of men, women, and children from 3,440 to under 3,000.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES BROWN,
Civil Commissioner.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 19.

The Rev. J. W. STACK to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

Report on the Canterbury Maoris from 1879 to 1880.

I HAVE very little to add to what I have already reported regarding the condition of the Natives in this district. Their social and moral condition is, if anything, slightly improved. The young men seem to be taking more kindly to regular employment; and the increased rental received for lands let to Europeans has improved the condition of those who derive all their means of subsistence from

rents. But, after all, there is no denying the fact that the bulk of the Natives here are very poor, and are incapable of bettering their condition; and it is greatly to their credit that, in spite of their poverty, they never relax their efforts to clothe and house themselves like their European neighbours. The privations they often are forced to undergo, in order to do this, none but those who live amongst them can have any idea of. Their habits of reckless improvidence have produced false impressions on many minds regarding their real condition, the results of thoughtlessness being too generally attributed to the possession of a superabundance of wealth rather than to its real cause.

It is satisfactory to be able again to report favourably of the continued sobriety and general good conduct of the Maori community. There have been no convictions for serious offences against the law, and very few for minor offences. This is in a great measure owing to the supervision exercised over individuals by the runanga which exists in every village, and which, under proper guidance, is a very useful institution.

The long-looked-for sitting of the Native Land Court took place at Kaiapoi in April last, when the balance of the acreage ordered by the Native Land Court in 1868 to be given to the Kaiapoi Natives, for land given out of their reserve to Natives for whom reserves were made elsewhere, was apportioned amongst them. The Court had a difficult task to satisfy the numerous claimants; but, after a lengthy investigation, a settlement was arrived at which appears to have satisfied all but those whose claims were disallowed. This addition of nearly 3,000 acres to the property of the Kaiapoi Natives will materially improve their condition.

Great disappointment was expressed at the inability of the Court to deal with the question of succession to real estate. Nearly fifty applications were rejected, the Court having no jurisdiction in the matter. It is to be hoped that the law will be so amended during the coming session as to enable a speedy settlement of these succession claims to be made. The long delay has proved a serious loss to many, who are kept out of their inheritance by those who hold unlawful possession of it.

The annual allowance of £100 for charitable relief has been expended in affording assistance, principally in the shape of orders for food, to thirty-five persons. Of these, twelve were resident at Kaiapoi, seven at Rapaki, five at Port Levy, four at Akaroa, three at Arowhenua, and four at Wairewa. The number of aged and indigent persons is likely to increase, for except at Kaiapoi most of the Natives are dependent upon their own labour for subsistence. The help hitherto given by the younger people is likely to grow yearly less, owing to the general adoption by them of the European mode of living, which is so much more expensive than the old Maori way. Unless more can be granted for the purpose, I fear that those of the aged who have no near relations living will not unfrequently be allowed to die of starvation. I not long ago met with a case in which an old man was left by his neighbours without food for thirty hours. Seeing that the difficulty the Maoris experience in providing for the wants of the aged and infirm amongst them is mainly owing to our occupation of the country, it would seem only fair and right that more should be undertaken on their behalf by the Government than would be thought necessary in the case of Europeans similarly situated.

The death of Horomona Pohio has deprived the Natives of one of their leading men. Though not a popular chief, he possessed considerable influence, which was long exerted to lead his people in the direction of pakeha ways. Unfortunately, he was induced a few years ago, by ill advisers, to take the law into his own hands, and to endeavour to recover by forcible occupation some portion of the land formerly ceded to the Crown. The failure of his attempt probably aggravated the disease from which he was suffering, and hastened the termination of what, but for this mistake, would have proved a useful life.

Another Native school was opened in January last, at Anuku, near Akaroa. This makes the fourth Native school in this district.

I cannot close my report without alluding to the sitting of the Commission of Inquiry into the Middle Island Native Claims. The Natives have taken the deepest interest in the proceedings, and have formed the highest expectations of the results.

JAMES W. STACK.