

Rotorua and Auckland, without going round *via* Taupo. There is a fair driving-road now to Te Onepoto Waikaremoana, and also from ten miles south of Fort Galatea to Rotorua.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE A. PREECE,
Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 13.

E. S. MAUNSELL, Esq., Native Agent, Greytown, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Greytown, Wairarapa, 28th April, 1885.

In compliance with your circular, I have the honor to report upon the state of the Maoris in this district.

Nothing of importance has transpired during the past year, beyond the deaths of four noted Maoris in this district, namely, Ngairo, the leading Kingite of the past; Mikahere Te Tau, who has been a strong opponent of the Government, and who has been the recognised fighting-chief of the district; Rainera Te Iho, long known as the Maori gentleman; and Wiremu Tutere, one who was much respected by his people.

The social state of the Maoris has much improved. Intemperate habits, so noticeable for some years past, have been abandoned; in fact, a drunken Maori is rarely seen. This has been brought about by the principal men having joined the Blue Ribbon Army, and afterwards induced the people at meetings to resist the temptation of drink.

Comfortable cottages have been generally built by them; the old Maori whare is becoming a domicile of the past.

They have returned to religious faiths formerly taught them by missionaries of various denominations, and hold services amongst themselves.

As regards their political state, there is not much to dilate upon, beyond this: they are at present led away with the belief that a Commission appointed by the Imperial Parliament, under the direction of Mr. Gorst, M.P., is about to enter into enquiries as to the relations between the Government of New Zealand and the Maoris, and all laws immediately affecting their race will be changed, and a *regime* more consonant with Maori idea will be made. With this prospect, they have been to some extent induced by Hori Ropiha, who lately visited here, and who lately visited England with Tawhiao, Te Wheoro, and others, to withdraw claims from hearing by the Native Land Court, and not to support "The Maori Committees Act, 1883," hitherto so ardently accepted by them.

An election of a Committee took place lately, and at a period when members of a so-called deputation to the Imperial Government convened a meeting at Tahoraiti, near Woodville, attended largely by Ahuriri, Wairarapa, and other Maoris, a contra-attraction was created, consequently only forty-two voted out of about two hundred and fifty qualified voters. However, a good Committee was elected, the members of which are fairly localised throughout the district. Some soreness was shown by those who held aloof, on seeing that a Committee was elected in spite of their opposition.

Their physical condition is much the same as it has been in the past. Children for the most part die between their infancy and the age of fifteen years from pulmonary disease and constitutional derangement. This is due in a large measure to consanguineous marriages, the offspring thereby being constitutionally weak, and which can only be obviated by intermarriages with distant tribes. There are a few cases where marriages have been between persons of distant tribes, and the results have proved fruitful and healthy.

In conversation the other day with Piripi Te Maari, a respectable and influential man, he mentioned he had three grown daughters, and he was anxious to have them married to men of outside tribes, "For," he said, "I wish to have many grandchildren. If I give them to men of Wairarapa, and they bear children, the children will die; the blood is too close." I coincided with him, and he further told me that there were many children in the Lower Valley whose mothers came from the South Island, the Ngaitahu tribe.

The mortality of children during the past year has been considerable, from the causes mentioned. Manihera, of Papawai, has lost all his children by a second wife, who is a near relation.

About nineteen years ago, by census taken, the Maori population of this district was approximately nine hundred and eighty souls, now about six hundred and fifty. It is made up now principally with adults, varying from the ages of forty to seventy years; the younger persons are not, on the whole, robust.

At Papawai and Te Oreore there are two schools, masters being employed by the Education Department, but are poorly attended.

I am informed that Te Whiti and Titokowaru have signified their intention to visit the district next June. The Papawai Natives are busy in the erection of a large house to accommodate the visitors. The visit is said to be of a peaceful character.

The Native reserves grievance of the past has been adjusted; the ownership to the several reserves has been settled by Mr. Mackay, to the satisfaction of all concerned.

I have, &c.,

E. S. MAUNSELL.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 14.

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

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Wanganui, 27th April, 1885.

I have the honor to again report on the state of the Natives in my district; and, in doing so,