

1885.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN NATIVE DISTRICTS.

[In Continuation of G.—1, 1884.]

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.

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 25th March, 1885.

I am directed by the Hon. the Native Minister to request that you will be good enough to forward to this office, on or before the 30th proximo, a report, for presentation to Parliament, on the state of the Natives in your district.

Mr. Ballance desires that your report should contain the fullest information that you can furnish as to the social, political, and physical state of the Natives; whether they are increasing, their progress in industrial pursuits, and generally as to any matter that may be of public interest concerning them.

I have, &c.,

T. W. LEWIS,
Under-Secretary.

No. 2.

S. VON STÜRMER, ESQ., R.M., Hokianga, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Hokianga, 20th April, 1885.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular Letter of the number and date noted in the margin (No. 3, 25th March, 1885), requesting me to forward my usual annual report upon the state of the Natives in this district for presentation to Parliament, and now beg to forward the report herewith.

I have, &c.,

SPENCER VON STÜRMER,
Resident Magistrate.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

REPORT.

There is but little change in the condition of the Natives in this district during the past year. The health of the people has been fairly good, and no epidemic of any kind has visited the district. The births reported have been slightly in excess of the deaths, but, notwithstanding this, I am inclined to believe that the Native population is slowly, but steadily, on the decrease. Deaths of both adults and infants take place on the gum fields and elsewhere of which no report is made. The present generation does not appear to be nearly so healthy or robust as that which is passing away. This may, I am inclined to think, be owing to the fact that the Natives of to-day are not as provident or industrious as those of former times. They do not cultivate and store up supplies of food for winter use as extensively as their ancestors did, relying, as they now do, upon the sale of land, timber, or some other article, to make up for any deficiency when a time of scarcity arrives. Thus the children often suffer from an insufficiency of wholesome food in cold winter and spring weather, when it is most needed, and so lay the foundation of future weakness and disease. This, together with the removal of their settlements from the high to low-lying lands, may in some measure account for the change. There is an excellent work, "Health for the Maori," written by J. H. Pope, Esq., and supplied to the Native schools, which, if translated into the language and distributed amongst the adult Native population would, I feel sure, be productive of much good, for they are sadly in need of some radical change in their sanitary and domestic arrangements, all of which are so admirably explained in the work alluded to. I am very glad to be able to say that drunkenness, which used to be so common amongst the Natives in this district, is now hardly ever seen; but gambling still prevails, more particularly among the younger men. As a body, they are as well-behaved and law-abiding as the Europeans. The number of civil cases brought before the Resident Magistrate's Court in which Natives only were concerned being six, in which one party only was a Native—one hundred and twenty-two, and five Natives have been punished for minor offences. They

are now trying to work "The Native Committees Act, 1883," and seem anxious for local self-government, and, though as loyal as it is possible to be, take a great interest, and to some extent sympathise with the doings of Te Whiti, Tawhiao, and other Maori agitators. Unlike the Waikato and some Southern Natives, they have great confidence in the Native Land Court, and are most anxious to individualize the title to their lands. The Waikato chief Tawhiao is expected on a visit to the Bay of Islands during the present month, and intends holding a meeting at Waitangi; and though some of our Natives may attend out of curiosity, very few will take an active interest in the proceedings. The Native schools, of which there are ten in Hokianga, are working well and doing much good, and are a source of much satisfaction to those who have the interest of the Maori at heart, for it is to these schools that we must look for the future advancement of the Native race. Many of the more intelligent of the young men are now learning professions and mechanical trades, for which they show great aptitude. I think every encouragement should be given to them in this most important matter, bearing as it does on the future welfare of the Maori. Early in March, Maria Pungari, a Native woman, residing near Kaikohe, Bay of Islands, assumed the role of a prophetess, foretelling the end of the world and other changes to take place on or before the 31st of the month. Large numbers of Natives from all parts flocked to her settlement, amongst others nearly all the Natives from the village of Upper Waihou, Hokianga, who at the same time disposed of a quantity of cattle and food for a mere tithe of their value. They waited patiently at Maria's settlement until the predicted time expired, and have now returned to their homes, sadder and wiser men, blaming themselves for their folly in believing the prediction made, and not the woman who misled them. I am glad to say that no other Natives from this district were led away by the so-called prophetess. The crops have been very good, and a small quantity of wheat has been grown at Lower Waihou, but I hardly expect to see the experiment repeated, as the sparrows and other small birds gave a vast amount of trouble and reduced the yield. Tobacco is now grown as a regular crop in nearly every settlement, and is a real success, very little of the imported article being used. A very large portion of the moneys expended by the County Council in public works is earned by the Natives, who are excellent workmen, they tendering for contracts on the same footing as their European neighbours; and could they only become a little more provident in their habits they might yet rise to a good position in the State. One of the greatest difficulties under which they labour is the great facility with which they obtain credit. Once in debt, their whole energies become cramped, and they seem to be careless of themselves and lose all heart to work; yet, knowing the trouble which debt entails, they appear quite powerless to resist the temptation, and sacrifice their whole future for some very trifling present gratification. It is a great pity legislation cannot be brought to bear on this subject. If a change in this matter could be made, and the title of Native lands be individualised, there would be very little work for magistrates to do amongst them. In concluding this report, I beg to state that the condition of the Natives residing in this large district may, as a whole, be considered most satisfactory.

SPENCER VON STÜRMER,
Resident Magistrate.

No. 3.

H. W. BISHOP, Esq., R.M., Mangonui, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Mangonui, 30th April 1885.

In obedience to the instructions conveyed in your Circular Letter, No. 3, of the 25th ultimo, I have the honor to report upon the state of the Natives in my district as follows:—

The health of the people has been a great improvement upon what it was during the period covered by my last annual report, but a few settlements have still been visited by fever of a contagious type. It is very satisfactory, however, to note that the fatality has been very slight in proportion to the number of cases. The settlements visited by the epidemic have been Kareponia, Awanui, Pamapurua and Mangataore, but at the present time I may safely say that all those attacked are convalescent. Upon the whole I think that the past year has been a good one, so far as the general health of the Maoris is concerned. Supplies of drugs have been furnished by the Native Office to the Rev. Joseph Matthews of Kaitaia, and to the teachers of the Native schools at Awanui, Pukepoto, Ahipara and Kaeo, and these have been intelligently and beneficially dispensed by the persons in charge. The Natives have very largely availed themselves of the privilege thus given, of obtaining medicines free of cost, and I am aware that they prize considerably such privilege, and have perfect confidence in the ability of the dispensers.

In my last report I went so fully into what I considered the causes of these periodical epidemics amongst the Maoris, that it is not necessary that I should repeat my remarks here, so long as the people persist in living in such unhealthy localities, and in generally disregarding the most ordinary, and easily understood sanitary laws, just so long will they be specially liable to disease, which will be unerringly fatal. One or two instances have lately been brought to my notice, where families have been living in unhealthy swampy situations, and having had members attacked by fever, have immediately migrated for a time to a healthy, airy *kainga*, open to the fresh sea-breezes. The result has invariably been that the fever was confined to the first victims, or else that others affected, have had it in a much less severe form. I am hopeful that in course of time, the experience so dearly bought in the past, may prove of lasting benefit in the future, and that the eyes of many of the people may be opened to the fact, that to a great extent, the remedy for the deplorable state of things, which if allowed to continue, would very shortly be the means of decimating the race, lies in their own hands. Cases like those quoted above, cannot fail to make an impression upon all thinking Maoris.

They have been much disposed in the past to regard the great mortality from fever which has occurred, in a superstitious manner, and to conclude that they were a doomed people. I have endeavoured earnestly, upon all possible occasions, to point out to them the utter foolishness and

recklessness of such reasoning, and have urged that in physique and general healthiness, they are highly favoured, and that there is no possible reason why, if they obeyed the counsels of those who have their best interests at heart, they should not be able to ward off sickness and disease, as well as (as they are so apt to say) we pakehas do. When Mr. Pope's excellent little work, "Health for the Maori," is translated and freely circulated amongst the Natives, all the various points to which their attention should be directed, will be brought more ably and prominently before them, and the result should be in every way beneficial.

Generally speaking, the Natives throughout my district are poor. They can always earn sufficient and more than sufficient money, in one way or another, to keep themselves, but they never seem to accumulate, and everything is frittered away to-day, without regard to to-morrow. Kauri gum is still obtained in large quantities, and the procuring of this product affords employment during some portion of the year to members of every family in the district. Prices have been ruling somewhat low, but the supply does not seem to have been affected thereby, and large quantities of gum have been procured from the various fields. Gum may truly be described as the great stand-by of Natives in the North. They can never want while this is procurable, and a visit to the gum-fields for a few weeks provides enough to live on for some time, without the necessity of doing any work. Both physically and morally the effect is bad. Physically, because often the whole population, men, women, and children, turn out and live on the swampy ground, either in miserable whares or in dilapidated tents, often wet through—always damp, and living on wretched food, thus laying the sure foundation of subsequent disease. Morally, because knowing that gum is so easily procurable, and pays so well, they neglect their homes and the education of their children, and render themselves unfit for any settled employment. The proof of this is to be seen in the various settlements, and when gum gets really scarce, I fear that a bitter lesson will have to be learnt.

A number of the young men get constant employment in the various kauri bushes. They make splendid bushmen, and are in demand by contractors. Very fair wages are paid, and the men appear to be well off. Some enterprising individual at times essays to take a large bush contract, and at first everything goes on in a flourishing manner, but soon the want of capital bears him down, until, in many instances, he is glad to get quit of his contract at any loss. Occasionally, one may make money and do well, but the reverse is generally the case.

Whaling is carried on with great enthusiasm during the season by the Natives living in the Coast Settlement. The equipment of the several boats is very complete, and must entail considerable expense. The Natives show great aptitude in following this industry, but, unfortunately, very little success was met with last year, whales being scarce.

The small quantity of land under cultivation by Natives throughout the district is very noticeable, and when I compare the present state of things with that of previous years, I cannot but regard it as a matter for deep regret. A few small patches of potatoes, *tukau*, *taro*, and corn, can be seen dotted about here and there, but no systematic effort is made to farm the tracts of splendid land lying waste in every direction. Some of the inland Natives grow enough tobacco to supply their own wants, but the crop is not raised in any quantity.

A general wish exists amongst the Natives to have their titles to lands individualized. This wish is not on account of a desire to sell, but simply because each man has a decided opinion that it would be better for him in every way to have a separate Crown grant for his own piece of land, in preference to being a tenant in common with others. In my annual report for the year 1883, I touched upon this matter, and stated then my opinion that it would benefit the Natives if increased facilities were placed in their way to individualize their titles. Time has seemed to strengthen this opinion. The expense at present attendant upon procuring a subdivision of a block of land, necessitating an immediate outlay, is, in most cases, far too heavy to be met by the Native owners. In a report of this description it is impossible to go very fully into the reasons which can be urged for facilitating subdivision, and in a sense thereby making each Native a separate freeholder, but I am decidedly of opinion that it would, in the end, have the effect of doing more to break up the mischievous system of communism than anything else that could be suggested. *Huis*, *hakaris*, &c., would then be almost impossible, and thus the popular means of impoverishment would be done away with. If the *kaingas* especially were subdivided into lots, say, of ten acres, each Native owner would feel more interest in improving his holding, instead of feeling, as he does at present, that let him work ever so hard, he will never be one penny better off for his labour, for others will reap the benefit.

I am very pleased to be able to record the continued sobriety of the people as a whole. This is apparent throughout the North, and is exceedingly gratifying to those persons who take an interest in the welfare of the Natives, and who are able to look back to the state of things existing a few years ago.

Another point well worthy of note is the freedom of this district from all crime of a serious nature. Minor offences there always will be amongst a population so large as there is here, but the past year shows a gratifying comparison with previous years. When cases do arise requiring the intervention of the authorities, I, as a rule, meet with the greatest assistance and co-operation at the hands of the leading Natives, and it is seldom indeed that I find any difficulty in effectively carrying out the law. The Native Assessors are always able and willing to assist me, and I have been much indebted to them at various times for their cordial co-operation. In this respect, Timoti Puhipi, the leading chief of the Rarawa Tribe, is especially worthy of mention.

Two years ago, I could have said with certainty that the Natives in the north were increasing in number, but the ravages made by sickness since then have reduced them somewhat, and I am of opinion that at the present time the race is stationary.

In political matters a great distinction is to be observed between the Ngapuhi Tribe, which people the southern portion of my district, and the Rarawa and Aupouri Tribes, which reside from Mangonui northwards. Whereas the former are constantly in a state of agitation and dissatisfaction,

the latter, as a body, are quite content to accept things as they are, and to believe that the Government means well by them. The Ngapuhis view everything emanating from a Government official with a great amount of suspicion, and are constantly harping upon the Treaty of Waitangi, embassies to England, Acts, which they contend are *ultra vires*, as affecting the Maori people, petitions to the Queen, &c., &c. This feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction is fostered by those persons who are never happy unless they are bringing themselves into prominence, or acquiring notoriety of some sort. Though many of the Natives do not understand what it is they do actually want, I imagine that the sum and substance of it when reduced to *quasi* common-sense, is a desire for some sort of wild home-rule. At the same time there is a great lack of unanimity of thought and action amongst them, and one tribe at all times is inclined to be suspicious and mistrustful of the aims and intentions of another.

When "King" Tawhiao recently visited the Bay of Islands, very little notice of the matter was taken throughout the north, although the occasion had been notified for some months beforehand. Only one representative of the Rarawa Tribe attended, and in conversation with me shortly after his return, he expressed himself pretty plainly on "King" matters generally.

The Bay of Islands Native Committee held their first meeting here in January last; eleven out of the twelve members were present, the majority having travelled great distances in order to take part in the proceedings. Hone Mohi Tawhai, late member of the House of Representatives, was elected chairman, and as provided by law, he immediately took the oath of allegiance before me, subsequently administering the same himself to the other members of the Committee. I am not aware that the Committee has as yet done anything worthy of note, and I do not think very much interest is taken in its existence. The enormous district within its jurisdiction, and the great distance that some of its members will have to travel in order to attend meetings, must militate against its usefulness in some degree.

A matter which has been for some time past attracting attention in every direction amongst the Natives, is what is known as "surplus land." The Maoris have a fixed idea that it is possible for them to recover possession of these lands, and in some cases considerable sums of money have been collected in order to enable these claims to be prosecuted. I do not think, however, that anything has so far been done in the matter, beyond bringing an occasional case before the Native Land Court.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced by the Sheep Inspector in getting Native owners of sheep to make the returns required by law, and some time ago we were compelled to prosecute several defaulters. They were duly brought to Court, and though the cases had excited very great interest, and several Natives had openly expressed their intention of defying the law, after the whole matter had been thoroughly explained, and a few quiet but firm words of advice spoken to them, they one and all made the returns required of them, and the cases were withdrawn upon payment of costs. Sydney Taiwhanga was present as a sort of legal adviser, having been brought from Auckland for the occasion at the expense of the Natives, but after being put in his proper place by the Court, he subsided, and contented himself with subsequently haranguing the Natives, outside the Court, upon their "burning wrongs," and recommending various questionable courses of action.

Direct taxation, such as that under the Sheep Act, and the Dog Registration Act, is extremely obnoxious to the Native mind, and it will be a long time before they will reconcile themselves to the inevitable.

For a long time past Natives have got into the way of looking upon the Government as an opposing power, determined to grind them down as low as possible, and treating them entirely as aliens. It has been my constant aim to prove to them, by word and action, how utterly wrong they are, and how earnest is the desire of the authorities that all official acts should tend as much to the benefit of the Maori as the Pakeha, making no distinction of colour or race, and taking the broad line of placing all upon an equal footing as British subjects. I trust that the day will come when we shall see the Maoris a happy and prosperous people, able to compete with the Europeans in all those industries and walks in life which conduce so much to prosperity.

It would not be right to close a report of this nature, without alluding to the good work being carried on by the Native schools. Owing to a liberal and enlightened administration by the Education Department, a good, sound English education is now placed within the reach of every Maori child in the north, and year by year the parents are becoming more alive to the great advantages to be gained by availing themselves of the facilities thus placed in their way. Intermittent sickness at all times is apt to injuriously affect the attendance at the various schools, but taken all in all, there is great cause for satisfaction.

I have, &c.,

H. W. BISHOP,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 4.

J. H. GREENWAY, Clerk, R.M., Court, Russell, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Russell, 16th April, 1885.

I have the honor in accordance with the request contained in your Circular, No. 3, date, 25th March, 1885, to forward for presentation to Parliament, a report on the state of the Natives in the Bay of Islands District.

During the past year, nothing of any public interest has transpired to disturb their usual quiet, except occasional meetings to discuss political matters, and the advent of a so-called prophetess, who crazy herself, succeeded in making a number of others hardly less so, her first appearance was near Kaikohe, where a body of about four hundred people collected to await the appearance of Jesus Christ,

and a general change in all things upon the earth, during the month of March. Some of her more infatuated followers sold much of their property at low values, and wasted the money, expecting to have no further need of it. As nothing came of her predictions, the greater part of these deluded people have left for their homes; she is still with a few of her friends and relations, visiting from one settlement to another, distracting the minds of a small section of the weaker minded of the Natives from their usual and more profitable employment.

The Natives continue to occupy and waste much of their time at meetings to discuss political, *i.e.*, "Treaty of Waitangi" questions. A large one is to be held at Te Tii, Waitangi, on the 23rd instant, at which Tawhiao and a number of Natives from Waikato are expected to be present. The principal subject for discussion is the expediency of Waikatos and Ngapuhis jointly sending another embassy to England to lay their alleged grievances before the Home Government; great expectations from this are entertained by many, such as the return of all confiscated lands, also the foreshores, and various other rights, which they consider they are entitled to under the provisions of the Treaty of Waitangi, and of which they have been wrongfully deprived. These hopes and claims have been fostered and encouraged, in a great degree, by well-intentioned, but ill-advised people, both in England and the Colonies. The Natives are displaying much greater interest than in former years in electoral matters, as was shown by the interest taken, and the number of votes recorded in this district at the last election for the Northern Maori Electorate. This I consider a move in the right direction.

Drunkenness, I am glad to say, is far less common than in former years, and is, I think, steadily decreasing; this effect may in a measure be caused by their having less abundant means with which to purchase liquor, formerly obtained from land sales, &c., there being always this point in favour of a Maori toper, he can either drink or leave it alone, as means or opportunity allow, he is rarely a sot or a complete slave to his appetite for drink, as is so frequently the case with Europeans; this want of means, however, is not the entire reason, there really appears a reaction, some have donned the blue ribbon, though these are by no means numerous. I am sorry, however, to say that many of the young men waste much time and money in horse-racing and billiards, to both of which pastimes they are very partial.

It is by no means common for Natives to appear before the Resident Magistrate's Court as defendants in criminal cases, and during the past year but one on any serious charge. Civil cases against them, however, are numerous. The Native Committee, elected under "The Native Committee's Act, 1883," has apparently been so far a failure; I am unaware of any business having been transacted beyond the election of a chairman; they seem to prefer their own Committees, probably from the fact of these not being elected under Government supervision, these Committees, however, having no legal status, appeals from them to the Resident Magistrate's Court are frequent, or rather many cases are brought, during the hearing of which it transpires that they had been investigated before the Committee, the decision of which the losing party had refused to abide by. My experience is that the Natives much prefer, on the whole, having their cases heard, and troubles entertained by a European Magistrate, having really little or no faith in those of their own race; and I am of opinion that the day is not far distant when Native Committee tribunals will be a thing of the past. I find that the decisions of the Court are obeyed as promptly as by Europeans, and with as little or even less dissatisfaction.

In industrial pursuits the Natives in this district are very backward; they do not grow sufficient food for their own wants. This year their crop of potatoes are good and will probably suffice, no wheat and but little maize has been grown; they use considerable quantities of flour; the whole of which is purchased with money procured from other sources. They have some stock, horses, cattle, sheep and pigs, the sale of the surplus of which bring in some money. Many still continue to work on the gum fields and do fairly well; the yield of these fields is, however, steadily decreasing, entailing much more labour to produce a given quantity, the price of the kauri gum obtained is also lower than of late years. Some Natives find employment in the kauri bushes, falling and getting out timber for the saw-mills and squaring for export. Others obtain work in the bushes and on the roads with their bullock teams; I have also noticed a few working on the roads under contract to the County Council. The Natives in the more immediate neighbourhood of Russell earn high wages for a few days in each month coaling the Union Steam Shipping Company's steamers, working very hard one day and doing but little or nothing for several succeeding. This they appear to greatly prefer to steady work at less daily wages, at which they could really earn more money during the year. During the open season they also gather oysters for export, and these have for some time past been a considerable source of income, the oyster rocks having now been worked for several years without intermission, excepting during the short close season, show signs of exhaustion; if closed for two or three years they would recover to the ultimate benefit of all concerned in the business. If this is not soon done the whole industry, an important one for the district, is in danger of being destroyed. While on this subject, I may be pardoned for mentioning one constant source of irritation between Natives and Europeans—they, the Natives, contend that the rocks from which the oysters are taken fronting lands still held under Native title, or under Crown grants to themselves, are their's, and object to their European neighbours taking them without payment, this view of the question appears just and fair, although there may be a doubt as to its being law, it would settle a great deal dissatisfaction if the law officers of the Crown were asked to give an expression of their opinion thereon.

Shore or bay whaling of late has neither been successful or satisfactory. One party of Natives near Whangaroa Heads, however, last July were fortunate enough to capture a very large black or right whale (*Enbalena australis*), the proceeds of which, whale-bone and oil, brought them in but little—less than £1,000. Such prizes are, however, extremely rare, but few of this description of whale frequent the coast so far north, the ordinary kind is that known as the "Humpback" (*Megaptera Nova Zealandiae*), a far less valuable species.

The Native inhabitants of this district are in my opinion, slowly but surely decreasing, the deaths exceed the births in number, the majority of Native women have but few children, many none

at all, a large percentage of those born die before reaching the age of puberty. Doubtless much of this is owing to their mode of living, insufficient nourishing food, and general want of attention and care during illness, and neglect of all sanitary precautions. Gum-digging is a great source of disease, living as they do, when at that employment, without sufficient shelter or means of drying their wet clothing during the winter, brings on severe colds and coughs, these often end in consumption and death. At Kaikohe and its neighbourhood there have been many cases of typhoid fever during the present summer, from which cause there has been several deaths among the young people, it being next to impossible to get the Natives to attend to the directions of a medical man, his attendance in such cases is but of little avail, plenty of good nourishing food, good nursing and attention to sanitary rules being what is required, in the absence of these, the wonder is that so many recover.

Perhaps, by-and-by, when much fewer in number than at present, they may adopt from the teaching they are now receiving in their schools, and European example, sanitary and dietary precautions, or they may be forced to adopt them, and so be compelled to live in spite of themselves, this will, however, but prolong the time, for it seems to me there is no remedy for what appears the inevitable passing away of the Maori race.

I have, &c.,

J. H. GREENWAY,

Clerk of Court.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 5.

J. S. CLENDON, Esq., R.M., Whangarei, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

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

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular, No. 85-913, March 25, 1885, requesting the annual report upon the state of the Natives in the several districts under my charge, and, in reply, to report for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister as follows:—

Kaipara.

The Natives throughout this large district have during the past year chiefly occupied themselves in cultivating their lands, and gum-digging in those portions of the district in which gumfields exist. Their behaviour, with few exceptions, has been quiet, orderly, and loyal. Very few cases of crime have occurred amongst them, and of these only two were instances of larceny.

Their general health has been good, but a number of cases of typhoid fever have appeared, some of them resulting in the death of the patients. The cause of the disease is generally ascribable to their reckless and neglectful habits, and manner of living when on the gumfields, without sufficient protection from exposure to the inclemency of winter weather, and also to their utter disregard of sanitary arrangements and precautions at their several settlements, the location of which are usually some swampy place near a creek.

At a meeting of the principal chiefs of the Ngatiwhatua and Uriohau tribes at Aoteroa (Shelly Beach), a few miles from Helensville, on the 14th instant, a bust of Her Majesty Queen Victoria was set up, and twenty guns fired in honor of the event. Te Pahi Hihi, a chief from the Northern Wairoa (nephew of Parore te Awha, the old nonagenarian chief of that district, and first cousin of the late Te Tirarau) attended the ceremonial. Te Pahi Hihi was one of the chiefs who visited England about two years since, with Hirini Taiwhanga. The speeches were of the most loyal character, but as the meeting was simply an intertribal one, and of no political importance, these speeches have not been reported.

In point of numbers, the Native population of the Kaipara district are slowly decreasing, especially in the northern portions.

I feel it a matter of congratulation that during the past year the Natives have given up drinking to a very great extent, cases of drunkenness amongst them having been of rare occurrence.

Notwithstanding a number of attempts at agitation have been made by parties from the districts both north and south, the Kaipara people remain steadfast in their principles of peaceful relations with Europeans generally, and loyalty to Her Majesty.

The schools at Otamatea, Pouto, and Woodhill are fairly attended, and, doubtless, beneficial effects will result in many instances from the education the scholars receive; but I regret to say that a certain amount of apathy and indifference which appears in the behaviour, Native parents will, for a long time to come, prevent that advancement in knowledge and study it is desirable the pupils should attain.

Whangarei.

This is the smallest in Native population of the districts under my supervision, and, at the same time, one of the richest in natural resources of gum and timber.

Many of the Natives employ themselves in felling and squaring timber for the mills in the Northern Wairoa, or for private persons. Gum-digging is also a remunerative source of employment in the winter months. They cultivate a small proportion of their land, but rarely more than sufficient for their immediate requirements.

The only schools now in operation are those at Mangakahia and Ngunguru, and both are fairly attended.

The Mangakahia school has suffered a considerable diminution of scholars from typhoid fever, which has been severely felt in that valley. Here again, as in the earlier part of my report, the causes of the disease are mainly attributable to the unhealthiness of the localities in which the settlements or villages are situated, and the total absence of sanitary arrangements.

Very few cases of this (to the Natives) terrible malady have occurred nearer Whangarei, where,

also, medical assistance is more readily obtainable; and it is a noticeable fact that those people residing near the sea are freer from maladies of all kinds than the inland population.

No instances of crime whatever have taken place during the past year in this district, and very few cases of drunkenness have occurred. The Natives are, as a whole, peaceful and well-behaved, but a few in or about the Poroti District are, and have always been, to a certain extent, an impracticable part of the community. This appears to me especially to be the outcome of Hauhaism, resulting from the advent of some of the escaped prisoners from the Kawau during the Waikato war.

The only difficulty that has arisen with these people during the year has been in relation to the school buildings erected by the Government at Poroti, at the request of the Natives, in 1878, and with the distinct understanding that they would cede the site, which they now refuse to do, and also acting under adverse advice, refuse to allow the buildings to be removed. I expect, however, in the course of a short time, this obstruction will be overcome, and the buildings removed to another site that has been obtained at Tangiteroria under "The Native School Sites Act, 1880."

The population of the district has nearly, though almost imperceptibly, declined during the year, including Mangakahia, fully eighty deaths have occurred, while less than half that number of births have taken place.

Bay of Islands.

In the portion of this large district under my charge, as a whole, the Natives have, during the year, been quiet and well behaved.

The schools, I am informed, have been fairly attended. There have been a great many deaths, for the most part from typhoid fever, and some from other causes, natural decay, etc., and the Natives are slowly and steadily decreasing in numbers.

In this district the settlements are not, as is usually the case in other districts, situated in low swampy places, but generally on high volcanic table lands, consequently the mortality can only be ascribed to the Native habits being devoid of cleanliness and regard to the sanitary arrangements.

In many instances they reside in good wooden buildings, and with some approach to European style, but even here the reversion to their original habits is more forcibly impressed upon the observer from the contrast—good but uncleanly furniture in one room, whilst in another the residents recline on the floor with mats beneath them, in the good old Maori state.

There have been a number of small offences amongst them during the year, chiefly petty larcenies, common assaults, etc., but only one or two instances of felony. Drunkenness has also much diminished.

The people generally occupy themselves in cultivating their lands and in gum-digging, few opportunities presenting themselves for other occupations, except a few of the coast Natives, who in some seasons join Europeans in whale fishery.

The prophetess Maria Pungari prophesied that the world would come to an end on the 28th, or not later than the 31st March, erected an encampment at Waioro Stream, about a mile north of Kaikohe, early in March, and which, through the ill-advised and indiscreet action of some Europeans, created quite a scare for a few days, but which quietly subsided after the 31st ultimo, and, the fallacy of the woman's predictions having been proved by the effluxion of time, the followers dispersed to their homes. A number of these had disposed of all their worldly chattels before leaving Waihou (the head of the Hokianga River), and will, consequently, during the coming winter feel severely the consequences of their ill-timed credulity.

A meeting of chiefs took place at Waitangi on the 23rd instant, when Tawhiao and one hundred and forty of his followers arrived in Russell from Auckland, and met the assembled Ngapuhi, to the number of about five hundred, at Waitangi.

After a war dance, and a great repast of meat, potatoes, kumaras, etc., the several parties commenced their speeches, a number of the Ngapuni people and minor chiefs consenting to sign the petition presented by Tawhiao and Te Wheoro, but all the principal chiefs refusing to sign any such document.

This is very significant, and leads one to believe they felt their hereditary chieftainship might be jeopardised should they consent to act in unison with Tawhiao, who might then be considered their king as well as of the Waikato people; a consideration, I believe, they would most sedulously avoid, if possible; as the meeting will probably extend over some days, the result will be communicated to the department by wire.

The constant gathering and wholesale destruction by the Europeans of the oysters on the fore-shore of the Bay of Islands is causing a considerable amount of uneasiness; the Natives asserting a claim to the shell-fish under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Whilst a great advance towards civilisation exists in the Bay of Islands District, and where the early church missionaries had located and laboured amongst the Natives, there is also a greater amount of political agitation continually carried on, and an amount of controversy among themselves that would appear almost incredible to any person unaccustomed to Maori habits and language.

In conclusion, I would beg to remark upon the present demeanour and action of the Natives, in contrast to their aspect many years since, and of which I have the most vivid recollection since the since the year 1836.

That the result of acquaintance and contact with their European neighbours has in a great measure benefited them is an undeniable fact; but at the same time, it has endued them with a far greater amount of dissimulation and untruthfulness than they formerly possessed, and coupled with the untiring efforts of some political agitators, whose semi-European education has placed a small amount of discrimination and knowledge in their power, rendering them capable of reading newspapers and other European publications, and then disseminating their own crude and erroneous construction as to the true contents of the same, is more particularly the case in the Bay of Islands District; and, as mentioned above, when contrasted with the dignified demeanour and more reliable actions of the

ancient chiefs, is a lamentable fact, that can only be understood by those who have resided amongst them a sufficient time to become cognisant of this reality.

I have, &c.,

JAMES S. CLENDON,
Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 6.

THOMAS JACKSON, ESQ., R.M., to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Razor Back, April 21st, 1885.

I have the honor, in compliance with instructions in your Circular No. 3, of the 25th March, to forward my annual report on the state of the Native population in the Resident Magistrate's District of Papakura.

During the past twelve months the Natives have behaved in a quiet and orderly manner, and have made no complaints to me of any kind. Drunkenness, judging from the number of cases coming before the Courts, is on the decrease, only two Natives having been convicted of that offence.

The Natives on the West Coast from Waikato to Manukau Heads have decreased in numbers very much during the last ten years, principally from change of residence, many having located themselves permanently in the King country. As a rule, they do not cultivate their lands and store no food for the winter; nearly all employ themselves in digging gum at Awahitu, the sale of which provides them with the bare necessities of life. With few exceptions, these Natives have disposed of all their lands which were not inalienable. They were advised not to do so, but when short of food, etc., the temptation to sell and supply their pressing wants was too great for them.

The Natives at Kohunga and Taupiri settlements, on the banks of the Waikato River, about ten miles from Port Waikato, stay, as a rule, on their lands, and cultivate sufficient for their own requirements, but have no surplus for sale. They own a large block of land on the south bank of the Waikato River.

The Natives located by Government on the Onewhero Block, situated on the south bank of the Waikato River, immediately opposite the Tuakau landing, have not paid much attention to the cultivation of the lands allotted to them as returned rebels. They employ themselves, when necessity compels to provide food, in cutting flax, which they sell to the flax-dressers at Tuakau. They do not grow sufficient food for their own use, not even potatoes, and, from what I can learn, are given to drink. They are constantly on the move from one place to another, and are at present all away in the King country.

The Natives at Mercer, on both banks of the river, are decreasing. During the past twelve months there have been many deaths from disease; also at a Native settlement at Mataitai, near Wairoa South, the Natives have been attacked by a disease new to them. By instructions from the Hon. the Native Minister, Doctor Dalziel, of Pukekohe, visited both settlements. He reported that the Mercer Natives, several of whom had died previous to his visit, on the 8th of November, 1884, were suffering from gastric fever and diseases of the chest, and that the Natives at Mataitai, near Wairoa South, were suffering from a disease which the white residents in the neighbourhood believed to be small or chicken-pox. After a rigid examination, he found in the symptoms of the disease many points of close resemblance to those of small-pox, but, other characteristic symptoms of small-pox being absent, he reported them to be all cases of exthyma, an inflammatory disease of the skin. Two of the cases were of a particularly severe character at Mataitai. The doctor found only one Native properly vaccinated, and the greater part of the remainder had not been vaccinated at all. Fearing the small-pox, they were anxious to be vaccinated, and on the doctor's next visit to them he vaccinated thirty-seven. Many still refuse to be vaccinated, wishing to see the result in those already vaccinated. The Natives in the above settlements of Mercer and Mataitai are very poor, and frequently leave their settlements for a long time for the purpose of digging gum on the Papakura Flats.

The physical condition of those Natives who adhere to their old mode of living is, if not generally very good, much better than amongst the Natives who live near white settlements. The latter fall into the vices of the Europeans, but neglect to imitate them in taking means to preserve their health. A circular has been forwarded to all the chiefs and principal Natives in the Papakura Resident Magistrate's District, containing advice which, if followed, will promote a better state of health amongst them. The Natives in all parts of the district are rapidly decreasing in numbers, and their physical condition is very much inferior to that of the last generation. I refer more particularly to Natives who reside near European settlements.

Politically, the Natives seem to be well affected towards the New Zealand Government.

There are no Native schools in the district, and I do not know of any Native children attending the common schools. If some plan could be devised to educate the children, it would, without doubt, prove very beneficial to the Maoris of the next generation.

Excepting the cases above alluded to, the general health of the district has been very good, and the Natives have not suffered from any infectious disease.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS JACKSON,
Resident Magistrate, Papakura District.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 7.

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

SIR,—

Tauranga, Bay of Plenty, 30th April, 1885.

I have the honor to submit the following as my annual report on the state of the Natives in the districts under my charge.

I.—*Tauranga District.*

There is but little change in the state of the Natives in this district since my report in 1884, any difference there is, however, being in the direction of improvement and progress. The health of the Native population has been good, they have been as usual gratuitously supplied by Government with medical attendance and medicines. They have had much better crops than last year, the season having been more favourable, but as I have had occasion to remark before, the Natives in this district rely less year by year on their plantations, and more on other means of subsistence. A number of the younger men work for wages, and it is becoming a custom for large numbers of them to resort to the gum-fields lying between here and the Thames. The fields at and near Tairua are very productive, the Natives proceed there with their families, and not only live well while digging, but generally bring home with them considerable sums of money. I think that nearly a fourth of the whole Native population of Tauranga are at present absent at the gum-fields. It is gratifying to be able to remark that the improvement of the Natives in the matter of sobriety continues; their habits in this respect, are very different from what they were some years ago, and the improvement is especially noticeable in their chiefs. It is due in a great measure to a total abstinence society which has been established amongst them by the Bishop of Waiapu; I also learn that they have received letters from Tawhiao in which "Blue Ribbon" principles are advocated. Some of the chiefs have left here for Tawhiao's meeting in the North, and it is worth noticing that the *soi-disant* king continues, as I am told, his endeavours to obtain adherents in this district. In the Resident Magistrate's Court, Tauranga, the charges against Maoris during the past year were:—Larceny, 2; robbery, 1; forgery, 1; embezzlement, 1; drunkenness, 1; miscellaneous, 1: total 7. Of these cases one resulted in a committal, two in convictions, and the rest were dismissed. Twelve civil cases were heard in which Maoris were concerned.

There are three Native schools in the district, viz., Maungatapu, Huria and Paeroa, which continue to be well attended. The Education Department have just erected neat buildings for the two last-named, which were until lately conducted in temporary and unsuitable houses.

II.—*Maketu-Rotorua District.*

The Natives have had fair crops this year, and they have not suffered much from sickness. The Government Medical Officer at Rotorua attends them gratuitously, and supplies of simple medicines have been kept at all the isolated Native schools.

I think there is some improvement in this district as respects sobriety, but it is not so noticeable as in the Tauranga District. Land Courts have sat at Ohinemutu, Rotoiti and Maketu during the past year, and the minds of the Natives are chiefly engrossed with the proceedings. Owing to the intricate nature of the titles the progress in investigation is but slow. The Natives have during the past year sold some land to the Government and are anxious that it should be speedily settled. As in past years I have acted as Resident Magistrate at Rotorua, and Mr. Bush at Maketu; at the former place the criminal charges against Natives were:—Murder, 1; larceny, 4; burglary, 1; cattle stealing, 1; assault, 1: total 7. Of these 3 were committed for trial, 2 convicted and 2 dismissed, the murderer was found to be insane. There were also 18 civil cases heard in which Natives were concerned. A remarkable charge of highway robbery was brought before me there—seven Natives being accused of taking by force from another Native a considerable sum of money, which had been received from the Government for land, and which was being conveyed by the latter Native to a meeting at which it was to be divided amongst the tribe. The men who took the money it appeared kept it to themselves and deprived the bulk of the tribe of their share in it, but on the charge coming before the Supreme Court it was dismissed on a technical point—on the ground that as the men who took the money by force had a claim on it, and were part owners, they could not be convicted of stealing it. The case is curious, as showing how the law failed to punish what was regarded by Europeans and Natives as a serious offence—an offence that would doubtless, if committed a few years ago, have caused bloodshed amongst the Native people.

There are six Native schools in operation in this district, at Maketu, Matata, Rotoiti, Tarawera, Ohinemutu and Te Awahou—they continue to be, on the whole, well attended. The Natives of the district take an increased interest in education, and petitions have been sent to Government for several new schools.

III.—*Confiscated Lands.*

As Commissioner under the Tauranga District Lands Act, I have proceeded with the settlement of the titles as fast as the delays caused by the absence of Natives and by the carrying out of the necessary surveys would permit.

I have sat in open Court with an assessor fifty-nine days, I have divided 6,000 acres of the reserve lands into forty blocks and have settled forty-six lists of names. The certificates of these are now being prepared and sent to Wellington as fast as the surveys are completed. The titles to the whole of the lands within the district have now been investigated. Three or four blocks have, however, to be further subdivided at the request of the owners, and one important claim has to be reheard. I have, during the past year, completed the settlement of the titles to the reserves within the actually confiscated, and purchased blocks in the Tauranga District, and I have held an enquiry at Whakatane with a view to settle the title of a large reserve of 20,000 acres on the Rangitaiki River. I have

also settled—I think satisfactorily to all parties—the Ngarae half-caste's claim to land, which has been on more than one occasion before the Native Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives.

I have, &c.,

HERBERT W. BRABANT,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 8.

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

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Opotiki, 1st May, 1885.

In compliance with your Circular Letter, I have the honor to furnish the usual annual report on the Natives in this district.

Condition of the Natives.

If anything, there is a slight improvement in the condition of the Natives in this district. Since last year's report they appear to be better clothed, better fed, and have been free from epidemic since the typhoid fever outbreak amongst the Whakatohea at Omaramutu, mentioned in the last year's report. There is also an improvement on the score of drunkenness—only twenty-two have been charged with that offence since April, 1884, which, considering the very large Native population resident in the vicinity of this settlement, in which there are three licensed premises accessible to them, I think speaks very much in their favour. When drinking, the Natives generally confine themselves to beer, which, I presume, is preferred on account of their getting more for their money than they would if they drank spirits. There is one thing very noticeable, and that is, that there are no regular devotees hanging about the public-houses, day after day, the same as there are amongst our own race; I know no case where a Native has been charged with drunkenness three times, or even twice, within a period of six months. Although there were a large number of Natives from various parts here for three months during the late sittings of the Native Land Court, there was no increase of crime, but there were a few more minor offences than perhaps would have been the case, if it had not been for this great influx of Natives into this township.

It affords me much pleasure to report that the Natives appear to be getting more self-reliant and industrious every year. There is very little asking for food, clothing, &c., they seem to have made up their minds that the time for such presents has passed. Both the Ngatiawa and Ngatipukeko at Whakatanu have procured small flocks of sheep. The former have purchased four hundred, and the latter have received from their Patea relatives some five hundred as a gift. Besides these there are several small flocks scattered about the district. They are beginning to realise the value of wool, and I trust, ere long, many other sections of Natives throughout the district will follow the good example set them by those who have already commenced wool-growing. I am afraid, however, until their communistic customs are laid aside, no very great advancement will be made by the Natives generally. These old customs seem to be their bane. When one points out the absurdity of their adhering to them, the usual reply is, "How can they be got rid of?" If the answer to this is, "Commence by making the idlers work for themselves, instead of allowing them to live on the industrious and thrifty?" they reply, "We cannot do that, if we attempt it, we shall be looked upon as persons of no rank; in fact, nobodies." To so great an extent are some of these customs carried, that if a person possessed a horse, or other valuable article, which a chief such as Tawhiao desired, he would hand it over without a murmur, rather than be dubbed a *tutua*, (nobody).

So long as such customs are in vogue, it can scarcely be expected that individuals, or families of Natives, will exert themselves to improve their present state, and until some scheme is devised which will help them to break through these immemorial ancestral customs, very little change for the better will be noticeable. I believe the individualization of land, in small holdings, would do much in effecting the desired object.

Small holdings, not for hapus or sections, but for individuals and families, so that each person, or family, could hold whatever land they were entitled to, without being in any way connected with their hapu, or tribe, and free from the interference of both would be desirable. If some such arrangement could be carried out, I believe it would assist materially in weakening, and ultimately destroying these ancient usages, if not altogether, at any rate amongst those residing in the vicinity of European settlements.

As an allusion has been made in this part of the report to their behaviour, perhaps this would be the proper place to state that thirty-two Natives, in addition to those dealt with for drunkenness, have been charged in the Police Court with minor offences, and only one with an offence of a serious nature, viz., that of wounding with a knife, who was committed to take his trial at the next criminal sittings of the Supreme Court.

Besides the above, four Natives (Ureweras) were charged under the Malicious Injuries to Property Act; they failed to appear on their summonses, and warrants were issued for their apprehension, which have not been executed, owing to none of these Natives being seen in our settlements.

In the Resident Magistrate's Court, thirty-five cases have taken place, in which Natives were concerned, thirteen were between Natives only, and twenty-two between Natives and Europeans. The Native population is about the same as when the census was last taken. I have not noticed many new-born infants, nor have many deaths taken place. No chief of rank has died during the past year.

Disposition of the Natives.

As to the political condition of the Natives, I do not think they have any desire but to remain peaceful, but at the same time, as the Native is a fanatical and excitable character, he is always liable to be led astray by political excitement, got up by adventurers with the hope of obtaining power and notoriety. These temporary excitements take the Maori's attention altogether too readily, and take him from his work, in fact, they constitute a species of mild dissipation, which, for a time, he thinks vastly

fine to indulge in, but which unfits him for serious efforts of work, and fictitiously elevates him to a position directly opposed to his own interest, as also to that of his European neighbours.

There is, therefore, always the possibility of some Native, for the sake of notoriety, causing some slight disturbance, or, at any rate, a little commotion, and some anxiety. Beyond this, I hardly think there is any likelihood of their committing any very aggressive acts. The Urewera are the only tribe in the district who might, in the heat of excitement, when smarting under some imaginary wrong, and instigated by some discontented spirit, perpetrate some act which might cause trouble, but even these people, lawless though they are, would, I think, hesitate before they committed an act which would tend to cause a breach of the peace with us. If such an unfortunate occurrence were to take place, probably the good counsels of some of their chiefs would prevail in restoring order. The rapid increase of the European population is daily teaching them that their best policy is to live amicably with their pakeha neighbours. The Urewera, the Ngatiawa, and Pahipoto at Te Teko, the Ngatimanawa at Galatea, a part of the Ngatiawa and Ngatipukeko at Whakatane, as also the Whakatohea here, and the Whanau-a-Apanui at Maraenui, and Omaio, and Te Tatana's people, are all converts to Te Kooti's form of church service. The tribes at Torere, Te Kaha, and Raukokore do not countenance the Te Kooti-prayers; this is mainly due to the influence which the chief Wiremu Kingi exercises over them. These Natives say that there is no political significance attached to the fact of their using this form of church service; possibly there may not be, nevertheless they look upon Te Kooti as something more than an ordinary being, and there is no doubt he possesses considerable influence over all those Natives who adhere to his religion, which he might, if occasion required, use to further his own ends. It is difficult to assign a reason for his anxiety to promulgate his faith amongst the Natives generally.

The Urewera chiefs lately visited the Wairoa and Poverty Bay Districts, with a desire to propagate the Te Kooti Karakia. I am inclined to think that Te Kooti's object is to get the people of Wairoa and Poverty Bay to accept his form of prayer, in the hope that those doing so would at no distant period remove the antipathy they have at present to him, which would eventually enable him to return to the home of his forefathers. There is some slight foundation for this surmise, as every now and then we hear it given out that he intends to visit Poverty Bay.

The Urewera have once or twice lately endeavoured to shelter themselves for apparent lawless acts they have committed, under the plea that they were acting under Te Kooti's orders. He, however, denied giving any such instructions, and, in fact, stated that he wished they would not so act, since what time they have not repeated those aggressive actions, which, I may say, were purely between landlord and tenant.

Several large whares have lately been erected by Natives who have adopted Te Kooti's religion, rumour says, "for Te Kooti's use," when he makes his talked-of visit to this district.

The Te Kaha Natives have erected a large elaborate ware for a church and meeting-house. It is very well fitted up with windows and doors, self-acting chandeliers being hung down the centre of the building, and lamps are fixed at the sides.

The periodical visits of the Right Reverend Bishop of Waiapu seems to be gradually drawing many Natives back to the religion taught them by the missionaries, so much so that the Torere, Te Kaha, and Raukokore people are agitating for a resident Native clergyman to be located in their midst, to pay whose stipend they have for some time been collecting a sum of money.

Very little interest was taken in the election of the Native Committee, except by the Natives residing at the eastern portion of the district.

The Ngatai, Whanau-a-Apanui, and the Hepanau-a-Maru passed several large blocks of land through the Native Land Court during its late sittings here; probable area, about two hundred thousand acres. The land, however, is more or less broken, and nearly all densely wooded.

Crops.

The crops are very good this season. Roughly calculated, the present maize crop in this district is about fifteen hundred acres in extent, which should average at least sixty bushels to the acre, and realise at least three shillings per bushel. A fair share of this area belongs to the Natives. The crop may be looked upon as saved, inasmuch as there has been no early frost to destroy any part of it, same as last season. The potato and kumara crops are also very good.

Public Works.

The Natives towards the eastern end of the district seem very anxious to be employed on public works. The Whanau-a-Apanui are at present engaged in making some five or six miles of road over the hills to the Motu River, which will prove a great benefit to travellers, as it will do away with the necessity of travelling over a very bad shingly beach, which is not traversable in rough easterly weather, as the surf will not permit travellers to get round the various headlands. The Raukokore and Whangaparou people are also anxious to be employed on road works between these two places, and towards Hick's Bay.

Schools.

There are nine Native schools in this district under my supervision. The last quarter's returns of which show that on the 31st of March ultimo, there was an average attendance of 405 children; of these 235 were males, and 170 females. The difference in the number is very great. Considerable progress has been made, and several boys who have passed the Fourth Standard have been sent to Te Aute and St. Stephen's Schools, Parnell. The Urewera, though frequently mentioning schools, have not made up their minds to establish one in any of their settlements. The chiefs hold diverse opinions on the subject, and until they are more unanimous I fear no steps will be taken to educate their children.

Maketu.

I have visited Maketu periodically, and held the usual Courts there. The Natives have not been

quite so litigious this year as last, owing, no doubt, to their attention being more or less taken up with the sittings of the Native Land Court, which have taken place at their principal settlements. The Magisterial work at this Court has increased considerably during the past year. No serious crimes have been dealt with.

I have, &c.,

R. S. BUSH,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 9.

MAJOR SCANNELL, R.M., Taupo, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Taupo, April 14th, 1885.

In compliance with the instructions contained in Circular No. 3 (85-903), dated Wellington, 25th March, 1885, I have the honor to forward, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, the accompanying report concerning the Natives in the Taupo District for the past twelve months.

I have, &c.,

D. SCANNELL,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

REPORT.

The Natives generally have conducted themselves in an orderly and peaceful manner. With the exception of a few cases of assault, no criminal offences have been brought before the Court, nor have any others been reported as having been committed.

A sitting of the Native Land Court was held here in December to determine some succession and subdivision claims. No large blocks were passed through.

An important meeting, as marking a decided change of feeling on the part of the bulk of the Natives of Tokaanu, who have hitherto held aloof from us, was held there in the latter end of February, to decide on offering a piece of land there for sale to the Government as a site for a township. I was present at the meeting, and have already reported the result, and, on the return of some of the leading men who agreed to dispose of the land, the matter is to be put in train for the passing of the block containing the proposed site through the Native Land Court. These men are at present at Tauranga on a visit to the Ngaiterangi by invitation.

In the beginning of this year, a party, consisting of about one hundred men of the Armed Constabulary, was quartered at Tokaanu and Rotoaira, for the purpose of completing the Taupo-Murimotu Road. This road, from Taupo to about five miles south of Tokaanu, a distance of about thirty-five miles, was made for the most part by Native labour, two portions where blasting was required, which work Natives will never undertake, being done by a detachment of the Armed Constabulary; but in April of last year the Natives of Poutu, near Lake Rotoaira, put up a notice on their boundaries, forbidding the making of the road any farther. At the request of Mr Wright, the engineer-in-charge, I had a meeting with these Natives at Poutu, but they would not withdraw their opposition unless they were paid at the rate of two pounds per chain for the land over which the road was carried. As it was not intended to do any more work at that time, winter having set in, and the Natives employed on the road refusing to work till the following spring, the matter was allowed to rest. I informed them that at a suitable time the work would be gone on with, and they, in return, telling me that they would prevent any party from working on their land, and that in the meantime they would apply to the Government for the compensation claimed. When the party of the Armed Constabulary arrived in January last, the Natives thought they had been sent in consequence of the previous stoppage of the works, and withdrew from active opposition. Since then it has been determined to make a dray-road from the most suitable point of departure from the present road to connect with the proposed main trunk railway-line at Waimarino, and the work is now in progress. This road, running along the base of Ruapehu, under the active volcano Ngaruhoe, along the Tongariro chain and the shores of Lake Rotoaira, round Pihanga, and opening out with a full view of Lake Taupo, will offer a series of magnificent views, and will, no doubt, the road being open throughout its whole length, become a favourite route for travellers to the hot springs at Tokaanu, Taupo, and Rotorua.

The Natives generally are anxious to have the roads made, only a comparatively small section holding aloof, among these, I regret to say, the ablest, most enlightened, and by far the most influential chief in the district, Topia Turoa, who, from his personal character, birth, and family connections, is a man of very great influence, not only among the Taupo Natives, but also among the Upper Whanganui, Tuhua, and Waikato Natives.

With regard to the social condition of the Natives, it is difficult to give any decided account, some having partly adopted the social habits of the Europeans, with whom they have been brought into contact, while retaining many of their own customs. Among those who have had less intercourse with Europeans, their primitive habits still prevail, modified, no doubt, by intercourse with their semi-Europeanized fellow-countrymen. The tribe, descended from a common ancestor, or said to be so, is divided into many hapus, or sub-tribes, these again into families, all closely connected, not only by such common ancestry, but by intermarriage.

The hapu—descendants of a son or grandson, or, in very rare cases, a more remote descendant of the common ancestor—is the great family unit among them. They have their separate villages, and their lands are held in common the property of the whole. Members of other hapus may, and very often, have a claim on the communal lands of the hapu, but it is only so from former intermarriages. Each individual family of the hapu can claim some portion as peculiarly its own, but the great bulk of the land outside these claims is common property, to be disposed of only by common consent.

Polygamy prevails to some extent even among Natives who profess Christianity, no restriction being placed by public opinion on the practice. The wives live together, for the most part, contentedly.

Except among a few, the marriage contract is performed without any ceremony, and often dissolved in the same way. The property of the wife does not merge in that of the husband; she still retains her right to dispose of it independently after marriage, or transmit it to her children. Even though she marries into another hapu, or even another tribe, her children are entitled to and receive a certain share of the common property in land, especially that portion which may have been her own peculiar holding. The members of each hapu live together in the same village, and although every family has a separate dwelling-house, there is almost invariably one large one, common to all, used as a meeting and sleeping-place for any who wish. The meals are usually three per diem. Where the hapu is a small one, they are cooked and partaken of in common, the sexes eating apart; where large, groups of families combine in the same way. Having no amusements at their *kaingas* (the *halkas* are only for certain occasions), and the work of cultivating and shooting pigeons only occupying a comparatively small portion of their time, their lives are very monotonous, and, being a people fond of excitement, they are peculiarly open to new ideas, adopt them eagerly, and throw them aside as quickly. In this way, wars, creeds, schools, implementations of husbandry, committees, blue ribbon ideas, anything new is quickly taken up, hotly followed for a short time, and then dropped. Even the excitement of a small lawsuit is followed eagerly by all, the loser almost invariably seeming to feel as happy as the winner, provided he is conscious of having had fair play and a patient hearing.

The dead are kept unburied for from three to seven days, according to the rank of the deceased, during which time scenes of alternate feasting and weeping take place, the whole stock of food of the hapu for the year being consumed at some of these *tangis*.

The Natives have no real social or class distinctions, every man, from the chief down, performing his share of work.

Planting is the one great occupation. In some hapus it is done in common, in others each family has its own cultivation. The crops grown are potatoes, maize, oats, wheat, pumpkins, melons, very little cabbage or kitchen vegetables. The potato is the staple crop, but of this only enough for their own consumption is grown, very often not even sufficient for that. In spite of the fact that all produce would realise good prices, much higher than those which are obtained on the coast, it is almost impossible to purchase any. Very little oats, wheat, and maize are grown, and these only at Tokaanu. The soil in other places is poor and unproductive, and in many cases impoverished by constant cropping.

To the staple food (the potato) is sometimes added fish from the lake, the *kokopu*, which is sometimes caught in large quantities and dried, some meat occasionally, principally pork, more rarely mutton and beef. As a rule, they live in harmony with each other, comparatively few quarrels taking place, especially among members of the same hapu. The evenings are spent in the *wharepuni*, or large meeting-house, when there is one, talking over passing events, or perhaps relating some tradition of the tribe, by which and their constant repetition, every member of the tribe is perfectly acquainted with its history.

The principal stars visible in the southern hemisphere are known to them by name; also, the two great planets, Venus and Jupiter. Each month is marked by the rising of a certain star before sunrise, and they have a name for every separate day of the moon's age.

The political state is like the social, in a state of transition. Any matter in which the whole tribe is concerned is decided at a general meeting, and acted on accordingly—similarly with the hapu affairs—the chief convenes a meeting and acts as the majority have decided. The chief has no authority to punish offences, or levy fines, or enforce the restitution of stolen property, in matters of this kind, where they are averse to have recourse to the European Law Courts. A Committee may be assembled and inflict a fine which may be paid or not; in some places the law of *muru* prevails, but I have not heard of any instance of it for some years. There is no recognised tribunal among themselves to which they can appeal; in many instances, the chief, who by birth and character may possess influence, can do a good deal to repress offences, but these instances are rare and becoming more so.

At one time Committees were formed in the district, by which many matters were decided, but as they had no means of enforcing their decisions, and as these decisions were often most outrageous and unreasonable, they gradually lost any authority they might have possessed, and the litigants had recourse to the regular European Court, where they were in a position to do so.

"The Native Committees Act, 1883," does not affect this district, as it is included in the Tauranga District, and the Committee, elected at Tauranga from among the natives residing there, is too far away to be of any use to those in this district.

They take very little interest in political matters, only as they affect the lands; and the election of a Native Member of the House of Representatives causes no excitement.

There are two Native Assessors in the district, but they live each too far away to be always present on Court days. Whenever they have sat with me, I have found them sensible and straight-forward men, able to take a common-sense view of, and give a fair decision on any matter in dispute; but, as a rule, the Natives themselves prefer to have their disputes decided by the European Magistrate.

The Natives appear physically strong; the men and women being, for the most part, robust in appearance, active and well-built, and have all the outward signs of a healthy and prolific people; yet, in this district, at least, there can be no question of their rapid decrease in numbers. Every hapu, every village, has now considerably fewer inhabitants, than it had fifteen, ten, or even five years ago. This is not the case in any separate part of the district, it is the same throughout. To what cause or combination of causes the decrease may be attributed is very difficult to decide; it may be that the general tendency to consumptive complaints, induced by their mode of life, may tend to this in a measure, as well as the insufficiency of healthy and nourishing food and comfortable clothing; but I think these are not the sole causes. A great many more than was thought at the time perished in the Waikato war and in those which followed. The proportion of adults to children in the last census taken here was very marked. Families are small, two or three children being about the average, except in a few cases. I think the cause lies deeper, as the women, when married to Europeans, have generally large families.

A kind of leprous disease, called *ngeri ngeri* is, I believe, peculiar to Taupo, and only there about

Tokaanu; there are not many affected by it, about six cases only being known. The disease is said to be incurable by any remedy known to the Natives, to be hereditary and contagious after long contact. Those affected are kept apart, and have little or no intercourse with the others.

The only industrial pursuits followed by the Natives, are the preparation of flax for ropes and mats, and the manufacture of kiwi and flax mats for sale to Europeans, or presents to other tribes.

Some few years ago, a flour-mill managed by a Native, was being worked at Tokaanu, grinding wheat for home consumption only; but the dam having burst through a flood, has never been repaired, and the mill is now idle, and the machinery rotting for want of care.

D. SCANNELL,
Resident Magistrate.

No. 10.

H. D. JOHNSON, Esq., Government Agent, Rotorua, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Rotorua, 29th April, 1885.

In compliance with your circular, No. 3, of the 25th ultimo, I have the honor to report upon the state of the Natives in the Rotorua District.

As I have not long been resident here, it is perhaps premature to form conclusions. So far, however, I have found the Natives of this district to be generally law-abiding, and tolerably well-disposed to the progress of settlement. Although there are a few individuals who drink intoxicating liquors to excess whenever they get an opportunity, yet, taken as a whole, they may be classed as being temperate—in fact, I am informed that a number of those who, in former times were notorious drunkards, are now total abstainers.

There has been a considerable amount of sickness amongst the Natives during the past three months, chiefly arising from colds, but nothing of an epidemic character, their immunity from which may doubtless, in a great measure, be attributable to the fumes from the hot springs acting as a disinfectant. A few deaths have occurred, resulting from the ordinary ills to which flesh is heir, such as consumption, cancer, dropsy, &c., but I observe that there appears to be a fair proportion of young persons and children, and, from inquiries I have made, I believe that the Natives in this district are not at the present time actually decreasing in number. Their cultivations are scattered about, often at some distance from their settlements, and it is, therefore, not easy to judge of their extent, but I understand that, as a rule, they grow sufficient for their wants. Many of them pay considerable attention to religious exercises, services being held daily. The Bishop of Waiapu lately consecrated a very neat little church at the Native village of Ohinemutu, the Natives belonging to the Church of England having contributed towards the cost of its erection, and the adherents of the Roman Catholic Church are collecting money with the intention of following their example.

With the exception of a case of murder by a lunatic now confined in the Auckland Asylum, there has been an entire absence of serious crime amongst the Natives of this district during the past year. They are beginning to take more interest in the education of their children, and applications for the establishment of additional schools were made to the Hon. Mr. Ballance during his recent visit here, the Natives offering to cede the land required as sites.

It may perhaps be of interest to mention that, on the same occasion, the Hon. Mr. Ballance was asked by several sections of Natives to give assurances that he and his colleagues would uphold the Thermal Springs Act in its integrity, and an application was made to extend the boundary of one of the blocks proclaimed thereunder. The great bulk of the Natives of this district evidently look upon the Act as their sheet-anchor which will save them from themselves. Whenever arrangements are made for the administration of any block of land under the Act, the Governor has power, with the assent of the Native owners, to set apart portions of the same for all public purposes, so that both sides are equally well served. Unfortunately, the long series of litigation in respect of the township leases, and the consequent non-payment of rents, together with the failure of results in connection with the Maraeroa-Oturoa Block, have caused the Natives to hesitate about entering into arrangements with regard to other blocks. Had matters gone on smoothly, I have no doubt that by this time many other blocks would have been handed over by the Native owners for settlement, and that the district would have presented a more thriving appearance. Moderate rental is, of course, an important factor in leasehold tenure, and, if people bid wildly at auction, and bind themselves to pay more for the use of the land than it is fairly worth, they have only themselves to blame. Personally, I think that the present Township lessees are deserving of very little sympathy, but I hope that before another year has elapsed matters will have been settled on a more satisfactory basis. I may mention that the Natives are anxiously looking forward to the completion of the railway which is to bring this wonderland of New Zealand into closer communication with the world at large. Many of them will be glad to find employment in its construction.

I have, &c.,

H. DUNBAR JOHNSON,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

Government Agent.

No. 11.

JAMES BOOTH, Esq., R.M., Gisborne, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Gisborne, 29th April, 1885.

In compliance with the instructions contained in your circular letter, No. 3, of the 25th ultimo,

I have the honor to report that the Natives in this district are in a fairly prosperous condition.

This season's crops have been generally good, and food amongst the Natives is plentiful; but throughout the whole district there is not nearly so much cultivation as formerly; indeed, at many villages up the coast, the cultivation is done principally by the middle-aged and old men. Most of the young men leave their homes during the summer months, and engage themselves to the farmers in the district for sheep-shearing, and more especially for cutting grass and threshing, and cleaning grass-seed; they return home for the winter months, and with their summer earnings they supplement the supplies which have been obtained by cultivation.

These men having a certainty of remunerative work during summer on the stations, and their keep for the winter costing only a trifle, might, if they were more provident, be very well off; but with a very few exceptions, the Natives are an improvident race; their hospitality is carried to excess, and the opening of a new runanga-house, church or school, very often leads to an expenditure of hundreds of pounds, and it is a matter of frequent occurrence that a tribe, or hapu, after giving a feast, will, for months after, be reduced almost to starvation.

When a house is to be opened, the hapu commences its preparations often twelve months beforehand. Birds are shot and preserved, all sorts of delicacies are obtained, immense quantities of flour, biscuits, sugar, &c., are purchased from the stores, sometimes on credit; and when the day for the ceremony arrives, every effort has been exhausted in preparation for a feast which will probably last two or three days. The visitors then leave and take away tons of food, and the impoverished hapu is happy in the assurance, that a feast has been given which will be talked about for months to come. Now this sort of thing is going on and increasing; each chief and his hapu tries to provide a larger and more expensive feast than the one to which they have first been invited. A new church or school is to be opened, preparations are commenced, and so the thing goes on, and the Natives are kept poor. A few of the young chiefs, I am glad to say, are adopting European habits; and instead of wasting their substance in the manner described, are going in for sheep-farming, &c.

It is satisfactory to know that there is a strong desire in every part of the district to have the children educated in the English language. Various school sites have been given or promised, under "The School Sites Act, 1880," and schools are to be opened as soon as the necessary buildings can be erected at Kawakawa, Rangitukia, Tikitiki, Wai-o-Matatine, Tuparoa, Whareponga and Tokomaru. There are good schools at Tologa Bay and Akuaku; at Wai-o-Matatine the school is closed for the present as the building is being used by the Native Land Court. A new school-building and master's residence will be commenced there in two or three weeks. One or two new churches have been opened during the year.

As to sobriety and general morality there is, I am happy to say, a marked improvement throughout the district; drunkenness is now comparatively rare. Isolated cases of crime have occurred among them during the year, none of them being very serious, the most common being that of horse-stealing generally by young men or lads returning home from grass-cutting. The Natives themselves have always brought these cases to the notice of the police, and have rendered every assistance to bring the offenders to justice.

There are at present several (3) Mormon elders in the district. They have succeeded in making a number of converts among the Natives, but as one of the tenets of their religion seems to be total abstinence from drink, and they do not advocate polygamy, their visit appears to be more beneficial than otherwise. These people have not disclosed any intention of acquiring land in the district; they appear to have little means and live entirely on the Natives.

The Native Land Court has been sitting at Wai-o-Matatine during the last three months. In regard to the cost to the Natives attending these Courts to which I called attention in my last year's report, I am happy to state there has been a great improvement, entirely owing to a wise regulation made by Judge Mackay at the opening of the Court. He took the list of claims and arranged them in districts, and made it known that the whole of the claims in one district would be disposed of before those in another district were called on, and that due notice would be sent before each new list was entered on. This arrangement at once liberated a large number of Natives who were enabled to return to their homes. The gratifying result is, that only Natives interested are in attendance at the Court, everything is quiet and orderly, and there is no drunkenness.

A strong attempt was made by a few Natives at the opening of the Court to induce the claimants to withdraw their claims, but it did not succeed. The reason given for wishing to withdraw the claims was that the Court costs were too high.

Another attempt to close the Court was made in March, by Hora Ropihi, one of the men who accompanied Tawhiao to England; the reason given to induce the Natives to withdraw their claims being, that the Imperial Government would grant redress for grievances to which they consider they are subjected by the present land laws. This attempt also failed, and the work of the Court is being steadily proceeded with.

With regard to surveys of Native lands and roads, there is no opposition, except in the northern part of the district. There is there a feeling of opposition which originated through a judgment of the Native Land Court, given at Opotiki, affecting a block called "Puketauhinu," by which the Ngatiporou consider they suffered an injustice. This has led to the survey of large blocks of land north of Waiapu being prevented, and objections to trig. stations being erected on land which has not passed through the Native Land Court. The Puketauhinu case is also, in a great measure, the origin of the objection to the road being laid off between Waiapu and Kawakawa, although the ostensible reason given is the rating of the land on both sides the road.

Throughout the whole district the Natives are thoroughly loyal and apparently contented, and there is a growing desire to refer matters in dispute to the Government, and to the legally constituted Courts. During the year ended 31st March, there have been 82 trials of Natives for criminal offences, most of them being of a very slight character. There have also been 238 civil cases, in which there were 16 Native plaintiffs, European defendants; 190 cases in which there were European plaintiffs and

Native defendants; and 23 cases in which both parties were Natives. Quarterly sittings of the Resident Magistrate's Court have been held at Tologa Bay and Awanui, as well as the ordinary sittings at Gisborne.

I have, &c.,

JAMES BOOTH,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 12.

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

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Napier, 8th June, 1885.

In accordance with the instructions contained in your Circular No. 3, of the 25th of March last, I have the honor to forward the following report on the state of the Natives in the districts under my charge :—

Napier and Waipukurau Districts.

During the past year there has been very little change to note in the condition of the Natives. They have conducted themselves very well. There have been no intertribal disputes. The health of the Natives has been very good, and the death rate less than the average. No epidemic has occurred. The young Natives have acquired a taste for European sports, such as football, cricket, etc., and have acquitted themselves very well in some cases, having won contests with old-established clubs. I am pleased to say that drunkenness is on the decrease amongst them, the chief Hori Ropiha, who accompanied the embassy of Waikato chiefs to England, having returned as a member of the Blue Ribbon Army, has been inducing others to follow his example.

In the Resident Magistrate's Courts at Wairoa, Napier, Waipawa, Ormondville, and Woodville, the following cases have been disposed of in which Maoris were concerned, viz. :—Civil Cases—Europeans against Maoris, 131; Maoris against Europeans, 8; Maoris against Maoris, 25. Criminal Cases—Drunkenness, convicted, 13; assault, convicted, 4; assault, dismissed, 2; breach of the peace, convicted, 2; horse-stealing, committed for trial, 1; larceny, convicted, 6; larceny, committed for trial, 4; larceny, dismissed, 3; Sheep Act, convicted, 2; Sheep Act, dismissed, 5; Public Works Act, convicted, 3; Public Works Act, dismissed, 1; Railway By-Laws, dismissed, 1; Licensing Act, convicted, 7; lunacy, discharged, 1; Vagrant Act, convicted, 2; Vagrant Act, dismissed, 2; Malicious Injury to Property Act, convicted, 1; Brands and Branding Act, dismissed, 3; Dog Registration Act, convicted, 9; Dog Registration Act, dismissed, 2; Harbors Act, convicted, 1; Cruelty to Animals Act, convicted, 1; total summarily convicted, 51; total committed for trial, 5; total dismissed, 20: total, 76.

Native Crops.

Large quantities of crops have been grown at the several settlements this year. I have estimated that about 10,300 bushels of wheat, 8,800 bushels of oats, and 1,500 tons of potatoes have been grown in the district. The Natives, both men and women, continue to be largely employed by the sheep-farmers during the shearing season, the men shearing, and the women packing and sorting the wool; indeed, in some cases the women also shear. Natives have in some cases sheep of their own, and employ European shepherds; but I do not think that, on the whole, they have been very successful in this direction. The number of sheep belonging to Natives in this district is about 106,000.

Native Schools.

The Te Aute College, Miss Williams' Native Girls' School, and the Convent School continue to be well attended by Natives and half-castes. There are no Government schools in the Native settlements, nor is there any desire on the part of the Natives to establish any. I think this is on account of a feeling they have that the children should be removed from the influence of the Native pa and its surroundings. Possibly in a district like this, where there is every facility for travelling, it is better that the children should be educated away from the Native settlements, but I think that in remote and inaccessible districts which are thickly populated by Maoris that the Native village schools are likely to do good, and should be encouraged in every possible way.

Vaccination.

Mr Scott, the Native Vaccinator and Native Medical Officer, from the Poverty Bay District, has been vaccinating at the Native settlements in this and the adjoining districts, and has vaccinated a number of Natives. His mission, however, was not so successful as it otherwise would have been, owing to the religious prejudice of some of the Natives against vaccination.

Wairoa District.

The Natives in the Northern portion of this district have been engaged whaling. They caught 15 scamper-down whales during the summer season, which produced oil to the value of £600; and during this season, 11 sperm whales, yielding 80 tons of oil, of the value of about £2,000. They have also grown about 2,000 bushels of maize, and their sheep have produced 107 bales of wool. At Wairoa, the Natives have at considerable cost erected a flour mill; they have grown about 5,000 bushels of wheat, which they intend grinding at the mill. They have planted less than the usual quantity of maize this year; it is probable they will have about 5,000 bushels for sale.

Native Land Court.

A sitting of the Native Lands Court sat at Wairoa this year, but only a portion of the claims were heard. Some of the Wairoa lands were adjudicated on at Hastings; the Natives complain bitterly at this mode of taking cases out of one district to be heard in another. They say they have no means to go such a distance and support themselves while the Court is sitting. They frequently have to send a few men to represent the tribe; these have often, through necessity, to partake of the hospitality of the local Natives, who, in some cases, assert a claim to the land, which would never have been raised had the case been heard in the district where the land is situated; that, being under obligations to them, they have not resisted the claims as they otherwise would have done; that the old people, who are unable to travel, owing both to infirmity and want of means, are the best and most reliable persons to give evidence of the traditions of the Natives and of the ownership of the land, according to Native custom, are frequently shut out, and that a great injustice is thereby done. I may state that formerly these Courts were held as near as possible to the settlement where the land was situated, but that the Natives now have often to travel a hundred miles to attend the Court in a district where they are entirely dependent on the generosity of the local Natives for maintenance during the sitting of the Court; and if these Natives trump up a claim to the land, these applicants are at a great disadvantage, and prefer to admit their claim rather than to oppose it, owing to the fact of being under an obligation to them for support.

In the month of December last, the Mohaka Natives, who have always been noted for their loyalty and good behaviour, having heard that the ex-rebel, Te Kooti, was about to pay a visit to Wairoa, and pass through Mohaka (one of the scenes of the massacres of 1869), communicated with me, and desired that the Government should interfere to prevent the threatened visit, as they were determined at all hazards, to stop him. A large party of ex-rebels passed through the district to Wairoa at this time, and, notwithstanding the fact that I assured the Natives that Te Kooti was not with them, they fortified a pah, and armed themselves, with the determination of preventing him passing if he was with the other Natives; but, after ascertaining he was not with them, they allowed the party to pass unmolested, but held no communication with them whatever. A bitter feeling still exists amongst the majority of the Natives in this district against this man. I think it would not be advisable for him to visit this district; no possible good could come of it, and it would only stir up an angry feeling on the part of the Natives who object to his presence, and who have always been loyal to the Crown.

General Remarks.

A Native Committee, under "The Native Committees Act, 1883," was elected last year; but the Act remains a dead letter as far as this district is concerned. I am of opinion that any further special legislation for the Natives is unnecessary; the provisions of "The Resident Magistrates Act, 1867," are ample for all their requirements. With regard to the powers under the 14th section of the Act, I think it might be useful if a Committee of, say five men, were taken from one district to another to make an enquiry, and report to the Native Lands Court the result in certain cases, at the request of a judge of the Native Lands Court. Under the section as it is now, it would be almost impossible for Native members of a Committee to hear a case in their own district, without being more or less directly interested in the result of the enquiry.

Disposition of Native Lands.

In my reports of 1882-1883, I suggested the advisability of some change in the mode of dealing with Native lands. I still think that it is advisable that Native lands should be dealt either by resumption of the pre-emptive right of the Crown, or by the Crown acting through the Waste Lands Boards of the Colony, as agents for selling and leasing Native lands in the same way as Crown lands are disposed of. The land to be cut up into sections, and roads made or laid off at the discretion of the Board, the Government charging a small commission for acting as agents for the Natives, such commission to include expenses of the sale and survey, and the land to be sold free of the present Native lands duty. I feel sure this mode of disposing of lands would be acceptable to the Natives, and it would most certainly be of great advantage to the colony in opening up settlements in the country. The Europeans would get their titles direct from the Crown, and it would be the means of preventing the endless trouble in the acquisition of Native lands which now exists. I think that the Natives should be allowed the option of selling their lands direct to the Crown at a fixed price per acre, or to put it into the hands of the Board to cut it up and get the best marketable price. Great care should be taken to make ample reserves for the use and occupation of the Natives in each district, the reserves actually required for their occupation to be made absolutely inalienable, and other reserves to be alienable for lease for a term not exceeding twenty-one years, and either to be dealt with by the Board, or under the provisions of "The Native Reserves Act, 1882." I think the Natives should be represented on each Land Board by one or more Native members, either elected by the Natives within the Land District for two years, or appointed by the Governor for the same period.

The Natives are always suspicious of any change in the mode of dealing with their lands, and will perhaps be adverse at first to take advantage of dealing with their lands in this way; but it is a feeling which will soon wear off when they find they can get a better price, and get their rents regularly paid. I feel sure that they will see that the change is very much to their advantage, and that after a short time they will be very ready to dispose of their lands in this manner.

Wairoa-Rotorua Road.

A flying survey is now being made of a road from Wairoa to Rotorua, *via* Lake Waikaremoana, the whole distance of the road which requires to be formed is about sixty-four miles. I would suggest that this road be commenced at both ends, and that the Natives through whose land it passes be employed, during the ensuing summer, in the construction thereof. This road will be of great benefit to the settlers in the Poverty Bay and Wairoa Districts, as it will give them a means of driving their cattle through to

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 ideas 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,

feel great pleasure in being able to renew my statement of last year ; that, on the whole, the general state of the Natives is satisfactory ; in fact, there is a steady improvement ; and as to the up-river Natives, a wonderful step in advance has been made, the barriers of isolation have ceased to exist, and our people are not discouraged from going far up the Wanganui River to the interior of this island. A regular up-river mail service has been established ; this is felt to be a great boon to the Maoris, and thoroughly appreciated.

The Catholic mission stations up the river are doing much good. Great numbers of Natives now visit our town with their produce for sale ; and as they have, to a very large extent, joined the Blue Ribbon movement, they find their visits to us are productive of benefit to themselves ; and are, I think, not without some profit to our business men.

The removal of the Rev. Mr. Grace to Blenheim is much regretted by the very large number of his Maori friends, who looked up to him as a true friend and counsellor. I am glad to find that his successor, the Rev. Mr. Williams, is, in every way, a fitting man to carry on the work so well begun and performed.

The great Native meeting, held by the Hon. the Native Minister at Ranana, in January last, has become a matter of history. I am sure no one could read the account of that meeting, without feeling that the march of progress had made a most rapid stride among the Natives, as well as the colonists. The strong feeling, and unanimous wish that the interior of this island should be opened up by means of railways, roads and bridges, shows that the Natives have at last seen and understand the immense benefits conferred on a country having the advantage of these means of locomotion. I think I may safely say the "Native difficulty" has ceased. I am decidedly of opinion, that under a wise, just and firm government, we need fear no more Maori troubles.

So far as I have observed in my district, the Natives are numerically much the same as last year ; there is, possibly, a slight decrease, but not to a great extent. Taking the Natives in the colony as a whole, I am forced to think they are decreasing in numbers, but not to the extent generally believed.

The benefits of the temperance movement among the Natives are indicated by the facts that the Natives are better behaved, and better fed and clothed ; they are trying to improve themselves, and are seeking to assimilate with their European neighbours.

A Native named Hori Ropiha has been going about the Native settlements telling the people that a member of the English parliament has promised to come out and cause the Native Land Courts to be done away with, and that all confiscated lands shall be returned to them, &c., &c. He (Ropiha) sent some of his emissaries to parts of this district, but the Natives have resolutely set their faces against these doctrines, and will not join in the movement ; Major Kemp, particularly, has taken a strong stand against Ropiha's mischief-making promulgations.

The hearty support being given to our Wanganui River Steam Navigation Company by the Natives must be gratifying and encouraging to all who are taking steps in this direction. From the report furnished by Mr. Rochfort, I understand the Wanganui River can be made available for navigation a good distance into the interior of the island. In this morning's issue of the "Wanganui Chronicle," I read the Hon. Mr. Stout, with Mr. Blair and others "arrived in town yesterday (Sunday) evening, at about half-past eight o'clock, having come overland from Waikato. The party reached the Wanganui River, about 175 miles from Wanganui, on Thursday last, and came down the river in a canoe. The Premier and party expressed themselves much pleased with the appearance of the country, and the facilities offered by the river for opening up the land, Mr. Blair saying the Wanganui people had good reason to be proud of such a fine stream."

The members of the Maori Committee are desirous that they may have power conferred on them enabling them to deal with minor criminal offences. Whether it would be for the best to do so or not seems rather a moot question. While on this subject I may say that I have lately had invitations from some of the leading chiefs to go up the river and hold periodical sittings of my Court.

I have endeavoured to interest the Natives in my district in the forthcoming exhibition to be held in Wellington ; they ought to be able to send a number of exhibits.

I observe in some of the local papers that the Natives have shown some interest in the present Russian difficulty, and the movement of our troops at the Soudan. I am very sure that, should trouble ever come to New Zealand from an outside source, the Maoris would to a man fight bravely under the British flag—and the help of such men as those who defended Orakau is not to be despised. I have been in this Colony forty years, and, during the greater part of this time, I have closely watched the course of events, and rejoice to be able to say that at no time has there been so strong a feeling of loyalty towards the Crown as at present exists ; that this may continue and increase I am sure many will join with me in saying, "so mote it be."

I have, &c.,

ROBERT WARD,
Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 15.

W. RENNELL, Esq., Native Officer, New Plymouth, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, April 13th, 1885.

I have the honor to forward to you a report on the state of the Natives in my district, as directed by your letter of 25th ultimo.

I have, &c.,

W. RENNELL,
Native Officer.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

REPORT.

The principal subject engaging the attention of the Natives of this district during the greater part of the past year has been the travelling about from village to village of bodies of Natives, feasting as they go. As soon as it was known that the restrictions on large bodies of Natives gathering together was removed, the movement began. In August last a body of Parihaka Natives passed through the town and went on to Waiwakaiho, for the double purpose of celebrating the opening of the roads, and to lament over Te Tahana Papawaka, an influential Native Assessor, who was lying dangerously ill, and not expected to live. (He is since dead.) When this party got back to Parihaka, another and much larger visiting party was organised to muster there and proceed southwards. They set out in journeying by easy stages from village to village until they got to Patea, when they dispersed homewards again. They appeared so well pleased with their reception that they determined to muster again, and visit the northern part of the district, and go so far as White Cliffs. Between, however, the southern journey and the northern one, a split between them had taken place over some money matters, and the consequence was that the performance by the women of the *haka*, and swinging small bundles or balls of *raupo*, called *poi*, to time and movement of the body and limbs, which formed a conspicuous feature of the southern visit, was absent during their visit north.

On the southern journey it was estimated that two thousand visited Patea, but not more than one thousand five hundred visited White Cliffs.

The mode of procedure is something like this: The movement originates at Parihaka, when Te Whiti and Tohu give general instructions, and hand over to Titokowaru the carrying of them out. They leave Parihaka, where they have been mustered, on a given day, and proceed to the nearest Native village of any importance, where the hosts have prepared as much food as their means will allow, and have erected sufficient extra accommodation, say, from two long temporary houses, as at Waitara, to simply a break of fern, etc., to keep off the wind from the tents the visitors have with them. In some places the tents number nearly one hundred. When the food is gone at this village they go on to the next halting-place, the hitherto hosts now joining and swelling the body of visitors; and so they go on till they have reached the end of their journey, when they, who have hitherto gone onwards with great form and ceremony, suddenly become a mob hastening homewards, the reason probably being that, having eaten all before them as they advanced, there is nothing to sustain a large body of people on their return.

On their arrival at Patea they distributed a large number of Maori presents, such as greenstones (worked, or partially so), Maori garments, mats, &c. The greenstones included a great quantity of rings and ornaments manufactured by the Maoris who were prisoners at Dunedin, Lyttelton, and other places. I visited them at Waiwakaiho during their journey northwards, and saw similar articles, intended for presents, exhibited, but, I was told, not so numerous as they had taken south. They had a bundle of bank notes hung up with the other articles, and two men were told off specially to keep guard over the exhibits, and prevent visitors from touching. Their behaviour has been orderly, so far as I have heard.

The quantity of food consumed during these meetings is immense, from five to ten bullocks being sometimes slaughtered at a stoppage, large quantities of bread, butter, tea, sugar, &c., being also provided; besides their own Native food, such as shark, mussels, and vegetables. They sent to Nelson a few Natives especially to gather mussels, and the latter brought back several cart-loads of them for Waiwakaiho; and one Nelson Native sent twenty-five cases of apples and five cases of jam as a present and contribution. At Waiwakaiho over a thousand new cups and saucers were used, besides plates, basins, &c., in proportion, and about a dozen of new boilers; and, I am informed, that a similar number of the same kind of articles were used at Waitara. These liberal presents must quite impoverish the Natives, and I fear there will be a great scarcity of food this year amongst them.

One of the reasons given for these visitings, as I heard from a very intelligent Native chief, is to finally put an end to all bad feelings which may have arisen among the Natives during their former wars, they saying that peace has been firmly established between Europeans and Natives, but it cannot be equally binding amongst the Natives themselves until these meetings have taken place, where old enemies meet together in a friendly manner, face to face, and old resentments are banished.

They have mooted much more extended journeys, even so far as Wellington one way, and north on to Waikato and round to the East Coast; but at present this district is too exhausted to bear another similar strain for some time to come, although, with the object of entertaining visitors in view, the Natives will undergo great hardships and privations, and work heartily for a time to gather the means to feast those who visit them. My own opinion of these things is, that it is a way of passing their idle time. Natives require only a few months in the year to supply all their wants, and the question with them is how to fill up their spare time agreeably. Formerly, wars amongst themselves occupied their leisure time; afterwards, war between Europeans and themselves; later, Te Whiti's periodical monthly meetings; and now these friendly gatherings.

With regard to the system of leasing their lands under the West Coast Settlement Reserves Acts, I find a large proportion of the Natives are opposed to receiving their shares of rent, from superstitious motives, believing that by taking money so earned they will be transgressing the laws, or wishes, of Te Whiti; but they would willingly allow their shares of rent to be given to their friends and relations, if it could be done without giving written authority.

They have no objection to money if earned by their *werauera* (literally, "sweat of the brow").

Owing to their peculiar ideas, there has until lately been difficulty in dividing the rents, but now all the interests in let lands have been ascertained, and very shortly those willing to receive rents will get their shares; and I have no doubt the unwilling ones will gradually alter their minds when they see the benefits to be derived therefrom.

Socially and physically the Natives of this district are much as they always were, living comfortably enough in small communities, and as healthy as Maoris usually are, except when they crowd together in a dirty village, such as in the latter part of last year, when disease set in at Parihaka, described, I believe, by Dr. O'Carroll as a form of erysipelas, and was very severe for a time, but was, considering the surrounding circumstances, speedily stamped out.

Chest diseases are as usual very rife amongst them, and this, with the paucity of births, must necessarily be reducing the race rapidly in numbers. Having lately had occasion to go through the lists of names inserted by Sir W. Fox in some of the grants he recommended for lands on this coast, I was quite startled to find the number who had died since the lists were prepared (the earliest I dealt with being compiled not more than three years ago), and as comparatively no children take their place, only one conclusion can be arrived at, viz., that the race is dying out; in fact, the Natives realise it fully, as they often say, "We wish to sell our land to enjoy the proceeds ourselves, having no children to leave it to."

This inclination was, no doubt, in Sir W. Fox's mind, when he recommended restrictions should be placed in nearly all the grants issued under his commission, as, on occasions such as the meeting before described, the Natives would, if they could, sell all their land to procure means of making a great show before their visitors.

With regard to industrial pursuits (with the exception of the Waihi Natives, who cultivate wheat), I may say they have none, as the crops required for their sustenance being in, they do nothing more, unless some urgent motive, such as before mentioned, strikes them with sudden energy, and they will save grass seed, work for Europeans, catch fish for sale, or do any seasonable work to gather a little money for some temporary purpose, which being achieved, they return to their former apathy, or, rather, indifferent mode of living. I do not wonder at this apathy, as they see a powerful, industrious race rapidly taking their place, and with whom they are quite powerless to cope; and even if they were able it is not worth their while, as they have not the incentive Europeans have, *i.e.*, to leave a heritage to their children, as it might almost be said that, as a race, they have none.

They pay no regard to the education of the comparatively few children they have, as, with one or two exceptions, they do not take advantage of the free schooling now supplied by the State, probably from the reason that they see no reasonable hope of their offspring, where there are any, attaining an average long life; nor, on the other hand, do I think it very desirable that the Native children should crowd into the common schools, as, from the small regard the Natives have for cleanliness, and their liability to contagious skin and other diseases, they would speedily depopulate an ordinary European school, unless the Native parents exercised greater care with their children than they are usually in the habit of doing.

With regard to the Natives politically, a large proportion on this coast are, as might naturally be expected, passively opposed to what they consider European encroachments, but they feel they are quite powerless against that powerful organisation which they but dimly understand, and which they are in the habit of vaguely terming *Kawanatanga* (Government), but to which they turn in trouble for help and protection. They acknowledge, however, the justness of some of our laws, especially that of succession, though they frequently find them costly and cumbersome.

I cannot close this report without stating that I believe Te Whiti's influence to be as great over the Native mind as ever; but at present it is directed into a new channel, he being possibly compelled to find them some means to fill up their spare time to prevent idleness leading them into something worse. Natives in other districts may make light of Te Whiti and his doings, but none of them ever come within reach of his influence, but are soon, more or less, his admirers and supporters. His eloquent (to a Native mind) figurative speech and earnest manner doubtless have a great deal to do with it, but be the reason what it may, his influence is not diminished along this coast.

W. RENNELL.

No. 16.

S. DEIGHTON, Esq., R.M., Chatham Islands, to the Hon. The NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Chatham Islands, June 13, 1885.

In answer to your communication of the 25th March, I have the honor to forward my report of the state of the Native population of this district. I am sorry I was not able to send it by the time named by you in your letter, but this is the first opportunity of doing so, since receipt thereof.

There is not much change in the Natives since my last report, the only difference being, that they are more rabid Te Whiti-ites than formerly, so much so, that some of them are really almost mad on the subject. They are very restless and unsettled, and are constantly sending up small deputations with presents to Te Whiti—preserved eels, albatrosses, and money—and, I am given to understand, that during the last twelve months nearly £500 has been sent to him by the Natives of this district, a very large sum considering the small population. I can never find out what transpires after the return of deputies, as they keep everything to themselves, and are very jealous of the interference of the Europeans in all matters concerning Te Whiti. The Morioris, who for a long time held out, have now joined the Maoris, with the exception of two or three. All the Maoris on the island excepting Naera Pomare, a half-caste Chief, and about four others are Te Whiti-ites. They are all looking out very anxiously for the return of the Omaha from New Zealand, fully expecting news of great importance on her return.

I see no difference in their behaviour to the Europeans, being quite as civil and friendly as ever, and quietly waiting for the fulfilment of Te Whiti's prophecy. I am pleased to have to report that they are very industrious and sober, and, being in receipt of good rents for their lands and having good houses and plenty of sheep and cattle, are very well off and comfortable.

They appear to enjoy very good health, but I see very little increase, the children are few, and out of those few a very small portion reaching maturity, which cannot be attributed to the unhealthiness of the climate, as, during the period of my residence on the island extending over eleven years, there has not been a single death among the European children. With the Morioris there is no increase, only four being born during the period alluded to, out of which two only are now alive.

I mentioned in my letter by last mail that the Natives here have a strong objection to the enforcement of the laws regarding working on Sunday, as they do not recognise that day in the light of a Sabbath, and I have been endeavouring to persuade them not to work on Sundays, before taking extreme

measures on the subject. On the whole, I may say in conclusion, that a very friendly feeling exists between the Europeans and Maoris, although, as I said before, the latter are only waiting for the "grand event" to take place, which they have waited for for so many years.

I have, &c.,

S. DEIGHTON,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

