

appointed deposit their own moneys with that belonging to the trading venture. In these cases it is a wearisome job for Natives to obtain letters of administration. I will illustrate what I mean. Some Natives at Tekaha combined to carry on a store. Various sums were collected, with which the venture was commenced. After a while some profits accrued, which were deposited in the bank at Opotiki on fixed deposit, in the names of two of their number selected by the contributors. After a while one of these died, and about three years after his death a Native Land Court adjudicated on these claims, when it was found that the bulk of the money belonged to the subscribers, but a portion of it was the sole property of the deceased, and a further sum belonged to his co-caretaker. The Court made three orders, the surviving custodian of the money being appointed to administer the partnership portion, and two of deceased's brothers to administer what was shown to belong to deceased himself, the order for the balance being made in favour of the person whose money it was, who of course was appointed to administer. The Supreme Court, I understand, is unable to grant administration to more than one person in these three cases; therefore the Natives will probably require to obtain a fresh order before they can get possession of this money. I would therefore respectfully suggest that in cases of Native succession the law should be amended to enable the Native Land Court to deal with these matters without a further application to the Supreme Court. This might be done by giving power to the Native Land Court to assess some fixed percentage of duty which should be payable before the order was signed. I feel sure this would be a great boon to the Natives. Should the present law, however, remain in force, the Natives, after their past experience in such cases, are not likely to become depositors of their savings. Every facility should be given to Natives in these matters, so as to encourage habits of thrift. Should there be an amendment in the Native Land Court Act this session, I hope to see some provision introduced in it to meet this class of case.

I have, &c.,

R. S. BUSH,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

### No. 6.

Mr. J. BOOTH, R.M., Gisborne, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Gisborne, 1st July, 1889.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular letter of the 23rd May, 1889, requesting me to forward my annual report upon the state of the Natives in my district. Owing to my absence at Wairoa and the East Coast, holding Resident Magistrate's Courts, from the time of the arrival of your letter up to the present time, I have been unable before this to write the report.

As to the state of the Natives in this district, I think I am justified in reporting favourably.

There is an almost entire absence of drunkenness amongst them. I do not think that more than a dozen have been brought up by the police during the year on this charge.

Excepting in two instances there has been no serious crime during the year. The exceptions I refer to are the murder by Wiremu Turei of his wife Mere Turei, on the 13th July, 1888, at Waiapu, and the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Pook and their child at Mataahu, for which Haira te Piri was tried, found guilty, and executed. It is to be remarked that in both these murder cases the Natives of the neighbourhood in which they occurred gave every possible assistance to the police in endeavouring to discover and to bring the murderers to justice. In the case of the Waiapu murder, the suspected murderer having been missing for three or four days after the murder, Tuta Nihoniho, with over a hundred Ngatiporou, turned out to assist the police. They made careful search through the scrub and bush, and they found his dead body not far from where he had shot his victim: he had committed suicide. In the case of the Pook murder, also, every assistance was given. The relatives and friends of Haira te Piri, having had their suspicions aroused, gave such information to the police as led afterwards to Haira's conviction and execution.

The criminal cases throughout the whole district, and including Wairoa, for the year ending the 30th June number seventy-eight. Civil cases throughout same district and for same period in which Maoris have been engaged either as plaintiffs or defendants number 251.

*Schools.*—The Native schools at Tokomaru, Akuaku, Tuparoa, Wai-o-matatini, Rangitukia, Tikitiki, Kawakawa, and Hicks Bay continue to be well attended, and the pupils are, I am informed, making fair progress in their studies. The Natives at Ti, on the Waiapu, and at Horowera, East Cape, are very anxious to have schools in their villages. The advantages of education are now fully recognised by the Natives in this district.

*Crops.*—The past season has been a most favourable one, and the crops have been abundant and good. A very large quantity of maize has been grown, more especially about Waiapu, and there is always a demand for it in the Auckland market.

As European settlers are every year clearing and breaking in fresh country, there is no lack of work for those who will work, and good wages are to be obtained. It is safe, therefore, to say that the condition of the Natives in this district is prosperous, and this is becoming more apparent year by year in the improved appearance of their villages. Many have now abandoned the old Maori-whare style of house, and live in comfortable weatherboard houses, and at almost every village on the East Coast may be seen the neat church, the Government school, and master's residence, and quite a number of neat houses, having chimney, windows, &c., and all occupied by Natives. There are some five or six ordained Native clergymen of the Church of England on the East Coast, and these are supported partly by voluntary contributions from their several congregations.

During the past three years or so there have been two or three Mormon missionaries on the coast. They seem quiet unassuming men. They live entirely amongst the Maoris. They have made no converts among the Europeans. As they insist that their Native converts shall give up drinking and smoking, the result has so far been satisfactory. I have not heard whether they advocate amongst the Natives the peculiar doctrines for which that sect is notorious in Utah.