

Natives unfortunately show themselves to be the exception to what I may term the rule. I am always, however, hoping for an improvement. It will answer no good end to particularly specify the localities. I referred to them in my last report.

The schools throughout the North are still fairly well supported in the matter of attendance and interest, but there is room for improvement. Many Natives are strongly in favour of power being conferred on Committees to enforce attendance at the schools. The subject has already engaged the attention of the Education Department.

I have, &c.,

H. W. BISHOP,
Resident Magistrate.

The Acting Under-Secretary, Native Office, Wellington.

No. 3.

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

SIR,—

Native Office, Otorohanga, 28th June, 1892.

In accordance with request contained in your Circular No. 7, of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith my annual report on the state of the Natives in my district.

WAIKATO, WAIPA (KING-COUNTRY), AND THAMES.

Health.

The health of the Natives in the above-mentioned districts has been fairly good during the past year. They have, fortunately, so far, escaped the severe epidemics of typhoid and other malignant fevers that Natives on the East Coast and North of Auckland have suffered from, although they have occasionally been attacked by influenza, accompanied by a sort of low fever and general prostration, which, in a few cases, principally those of children, has ended fatally. I regret to have to report the death of two young men, within the last fortnight, from eating honey. They belonged to a settlement called Mangaorongo, about ten miles from here. It appears that whilst in the bush they came across a tree that contained honey, which they ate of plentifully, with the result that on their return home they were taken ill with severe pains, and, although emetics were given to them, and the Maori remedy of placing them in water was resorted to, they died in great pain. The Natives account for the fact of bush-honey being poisonous at this time of the year because it is now that the small plant called *waoriki* that grows in moist swampy places is in flower, and they say that the honey that bees extract from it is of a poisonous nature, and is likely to be fatal when eaten in excess. There is no medical officer for Natives in this district, and no one to distribute medicines to them—Mrs. Berry, who used to perform that duty, having left the district. The Natives have therefore to take their chance between the local Maori *tohunga*, or doctor, and the few proprietary medicines that are on sale at the local stores. The only death of importance that has taken place in this district during the past year has been that of the well-known chief Hone te One (*anglice*, John Jones), who died at Kawhia on the 16th instant, aged about eighty-two years. Hone te One was a well-known character during the time of the Waikato war, in 1863–64, and he, with Wiremu Nero (William Naylor) and Major Te Wheoro, were noted at that time for the loyalty they displayed to the Queen, and the assistance they and their people gave to the European forces, both civil and military; and, subsequent to the Waikato war, when the Compensation Courts were held in Waikato for the purpose of returning to the friendly Natives their land that had been included in the Proclamation of confiscation, Hone te One was of great assistance to Mr. James Mackay, the Civil Commissioner at that time, and also to the officers of the Compensation Court. He was a kindly, well-disposed man, and was respected by Europeans of all classes who knew him. He had been in receipt of a Government pension for many years prior to his death. I may also mention here (although it did not occur within my district) the death of the chief Paora Tuhaere, of Auckland. He died on the 12th March last. Paora (or Paul) was such a well-known character in and about Auckland, and his loyalty and friendship to Europeans since the days of the early settlement of Auckland is so well known, that I need not expatiate upon them here, more especially as the Auckland newspapers published his biography at the time of his death. He, also, had been a Government pensioner for a number of years.

Social Position.

The social position of the Natives in the Upper Waikato and King-country is not much changed since my last report. The absence of European settlement amongst them naturally makes their progress towards civilisation rather slow. It is satisfactory, however, to be able to report that they still remain remarkably temperate, and crime of a serious nature is very rare amongst them. Those of them who can afford to do so have had wooden houses built for themselves; but I must say that in most cases the houses are built more from a feeling of pride on the part of the owners at being able to say that they own a wooden house than from any desire to occupy it permanently themselves. There is a want of sociability about a wooden house that makes it unsuitable to the Maori mind (and body) for permanent residence. They cannot sit all round the fire as in the case of the fire in the centre of the Maori whare. They do not feel so at home, or at ease, on the boarded floor of the pakeha house as on the fern and mat-covered floor of the Maori whare; in fact, to occupy one for any length of time entails upon them a state of existence quite foreign to what they have been used to; so that, apart from the uncomfortableness (to them) of it, there is the fact that it is more difficult to keep clean. It is no wonder, therefore, that a Maori possessor of a wooden house is not long before he is on the look-out for a European tenant for it.

The Natives in the King-country continue to run sheep upon their waste lands; but their success has not been great during the past year, and I quite expect that in a few years they will give