

The request made in the 9th clause of the petition, that other Assessors be appointed, might be advantageously acted upon in the selection of two or three active and intelligent young men, if funds were available. Some of the Assessors, though useful men, are advancing in years, cannot travel much, and seldom assist in the adjudication of cases.

With regard to the question of education, I place more reliance upon the success of central than of village schools. But in the absence of the former, rather than nothing should be attempted, I would suggest that a village school be set on foot at Waima, the Government to provide the teacher, the Natives to find him a residence, also a school-room, and to exert their influence in keeping up a regular attendance on the part of the scholars; the school to be established for twelve months, and if at the end of that period it fail in producing satisfactory results, the teacher to be removed to another village.

The statement made in the petition, that the resolutions were agreed to by the chiefs of Ngapuhi and the whole people represented by the signatures, if unexplained, might lead to the supposition that representatives of the whole district were present, which was not the case, but few were there who were not residents of Hokianga. Those who were present did certainly approve of and sign the petition. But I doubt if the majority of those designated as "Ngapuhi ki Tokerau" (Bay of Islands), would acknowledge this petition as the unanimous voice of the people, or agree to its being acted upon generally without first holding a meeting of their own upon the subject. Even if prepared to indorse every word therein contained, their pride would forbid their doing so until the question had been freely and publicly discussed amongst themselves.

I mention this, not with any desire to cast the slightest discredit upon the meeting in question, but to show that it was more particularly a Hokianga movement, and that even there prudence will be required in carrying out some of the suggestions embodied in the petition.

The Natives are an impulsive race, actuated by the feeling of the moment. Many would acquiesce in proposals or resolutions advanced in general terms, without taking into consideration the possibility of their being personally applied, and when this was found necessary, might possibly oppose proceedings as taking a course which they never contemplated. Their professions require bringing into practice before they can themselves realize their full meaning, and we must wait until the question comes before them in a practical form, giving what information and instruction can be imparted in preparing them for the reality, that, when required to meet it, their course of action may then prove the sincerity of the desire they now manifest for the full establishment of law and order in this district.

Having carefully considered the subject to which my attention has been called, as a first step towards meeting the wishes of the petitioners, I would recommend the erection of a gaol and Court House at Herd's Point, with constables, English and Maori, placed in charge of the same; the establishment of a village school at Waima; and, if in accordance with the views of the Government, the appointment of a Resident Magistrate for Hokianga.

The Under Secretary, Native Office, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

ED. M. WILLIAMS, R.M.

No. 3.

Copy of a letter from Mr. F. E. MANING to Mr. G. S. COOPER.

SIR,—

Hokianga, 31st October, 1868.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant (to hand this day), together with a copy of a Resolution of the House of Representatives upon the subject of a Petition from some of the Ngapuhi Chiefs, and requesting that I may give any suggestions which may occur to me as to how the wishes of the petitioners may be carried into effect.

The most important part of the Ngapuhi petition is, the request for the more effective maintenance of the law in this part of the country, and particularly that henceforth the law for the European and Maori may be the same. I think this is the first occasion on which a request of this nature by the Natives here has been made with sufficient sincerity and by sufficient numbers to make it worth while to endeavour to initiate the system they have indicated, and the first step in my opinion should be the appointment of a Resident Magistrate here; the person appointed, however, would have a delicate and rather critical task to perform, and, to succeed, should be possessed of prudence and resolution, have a knowledge of the Native language and tone of thought, and be, in fact, as an honorable Member of the House of Representatives remarked, most wisely, on a late occasion, "a lay missionary" as much as a magistrate.

As the Ngapuhi promise to support the Magistrate if called upon to do so, I do not think that any constabulary force, except one or two Native police, need be attached to the Resident Magistrate's establishment. I believe the Magistrate should be stationed at Herd's Point in Hokianga, as the most central and convenient place. I think it would be advisable to appoint a few Native Assessors to assist the Resident Magistrate, but that none of the Assessors to the Native Lands Court should be appointed to that duty. A small gaol or lock-up should be built at Herd's Point; I think one gaol in that place would, for the present, be sufficient.

I have never seen much success attend the establishment of schools for Native children in country districts, and I believe that for the present one school would be sufficient as a response to the petition; it might be established at Waima in this district, without any very considerable expense, as I believe there is a schoolhouse at that place, and it might be stipulated that the parents of children sent to the school should either pay a certain sum per annum, or supply them with clothes and food. I do not think the Natives would object to some arrangement of this kind.

The Ngapuhi petition should be considered as coming from one-half of the Ngapuhi Tribe, and I think it gives a most valuable opportunity of attempting some progress in giving stability and authority to the law and the success of this attempt would soon cause the adherence of the remainder of the Ngapuhi people, and the adherence of the whole tribe to an improved state of things would be very