

Natives and Europeans, and the decisions of the Court have in every instance been complied with without further trouble. During the year two cases of petty larceny were brought before the Court, and as they were of a very trifling nature, and the articles stolen in each case returned, I have thought that the ends of justice would be satisfied by dealing with them under section 105 of "The Resident Magistrates Act, 1867," and in each case the fine imposed was at once paid. The health of the people during the year has been, on the whole, good; and no persons of rank have died, with the exception of Te Otene Puru, a chief of Ngapuhi, residing at Mangamuka, an old warrior who took up arms, during Heke's war, on the side of the Government, and for which he received a small pension to the day of his death, at which time he is said to have been upwards of ninety years of age. Intemperance does not appear to have been so prevalent in this district as formerly, and I am of opinion that in many instances the Natives have seen the folly of former excesses, and are endeavouring to avoid them. A large number of the able-bodied young men have been engaged for the last six months in preparing railway sleepers in the forests, besides those regularly employed squaring timber, and their being thus actively engaged may account in some measure for the improvement in their habits of sobriety. Three Native schools are now in active operation in this district, viz., at Waima, Whirinaki, and at Waitapu, the average attendance at which exceeds 100 scholars, but upwards of 150 are on the school rolls. These three schools are conducted at an annual cost to the Government of a little over £300, of which sum the Natives are supposed to return £72 in the shape of school fees, which, I am sorry to say, have not been collected in every case; and I think it probable that more pupils would attend these schools were they admitted free of all charges, as some of the parents, rather than pay the fees, keep their children at home, or take them to assist in the gum-fields or cultivations, thereby doing an injury to the children and the public at large. Two new school-houses are in course of erection, at Pakia and Rakau Para, which will, I trust, be completed during the next two months, the Native subscription of £50 for each building having been placed in my charge. I anticipate an attendance of not less than eighty pupils at these two schools. To complete the schools required for this district, it will be necessary to establish one at Waihou (Rarawa settlement) and another in the neighbourhood of Wangape, for the benefit of the children residing at that place and at Herekino. Whilst on this subject, I am happy to be able to inform the Government that the Natives still take as great an interest in these schools as they did at their commencement. I may also mention that since the establishment of Native schools in this district, there is a marked improvement in the personal appearance of the parents of pupils attending them, as cleanliness and tidiness are strictly enforced amongst the children by their teachers.

The Natives express great anxiety for the increase of settlers amongst them, and would, I am sure, do much to assist the Government in introducing Europeans into this district. It is certainly a pity to see so fine a country as this is, so sparsely peopled. The last season's crops of potatoes, maize, and kumaras have been good; a small quantity of wheat has also been grown in the Waima district, and there is no likelihood of a scarcity of provisions during the coming winter. During the past few years a considerable extent of ground has been planted in sorghum (*to huka*), of which the Natives consume large quantities, feeding their horses and pigs on the leaves and refuse, which is of a very fattening and nourishing character. In sheltered places I have seen large cultivations of it reaching in very many instances to a height of twelve or thirteen feet. That which has been said on former occasions of the loyalty of these people still holds good, and I see no reason to expect any change in that respect. I cannot omit to mention that on the intelligence of a Native having been murdered at Whangaroa, in March last, by another, and a rumour that the supposed murderer would not be given up to justice, Mohi Tawhai, of Waima, though a connection of the accused, at once proceeded to Whangaroa to assist the Resident Magistrate of that district in causing the arrest of the criminal. A serious cause of disagreement has lately arisen between the Natives at Taheke, regarding the right to dig kauri gum on a piece of land called Rakau Waahi, but which I have great hopes will be amicably settled in a few days. A meeting is to be held at Waima, on the 14th instant, to consider the matter, to which I am invited, the result of which I will forward to you in due course. Several hundred Natives are expected to attend the *hui*.

I have, &c.,

SPENCER VON STUBBER,

Resident Magistrate.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

No. 4.

The RESIDENT MAGISTRATE, Waimate, to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—Resident Magistrate's Office, Waimate, Bay of Islands, 12th May, 1874.

In forwarding, for the information of the Government, my annual report of the district under my charge, I have much pleasure in testifying to the friendly intercourse which has continued to exist between the European settlers and the Natives, undisturbed, during the last twelve months, by any incident calculated to affect the same.

Amongst themselves, the Natives have also been orderly and quiet, taking an active part in the various branches of industry,—at Whangaroa principally in the timber trade, in other parts of the district in the construction of roads, and generally in kauri gum digging, which affords steady employment to a large proportion of the population of both sexes.

On the question of education a more lively interest has been manifested than formerly, although generally they do not as yet fully appreciate its value. At Mangakahia, Waimate, Oromahoe, and Kawakawa, Native schools are already at work and progressing favourably; and at Whangaroa, Matauri, and Te Rawhiti, the Natives are anxious for the same to be established.

The Maori cases brought forward for hearing in Court have been but few in number, the Natives not manifesting that desire for litigation which they once evinced. Disputes, however, do sometimes arise of so extraordinary and complicated a nature, as to preclude the possibility of their being heard in a court of justice, yet, if passed unnoticed, would be dealt with by themselves in a manner which might lead to serious results. These are settled either by arbitration or by calling a meeting of the parties