

Before concluding, I would mention the fact that, in accordance with instructions, I have kept up regular monthly visits to the interior, during all kinds of weather, and that upon a review of the past, I congratulate myself upon the state of affairs in my district, and feel encouraged to lay myself out in the future to do all I can to promote the interests of the people committed to my charge.

I have, &c.,

The Under Secretary, Native Department.

RICHD. W. WOON, R.M.

### No. 14.

Mr. S. LOCKE to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Napier, 30th May, 1874.

I have the honor to forward the following report, for the past year, of the general state of Natives in the East Coast and Taupo districts, including Hawke's Bay, Wairoa, Poverty Bay, Waiapu, East Cape, Taupo, Tuhoe or Uriwera, and Patea.

#### *Hawke's Bay.*

The Maoris of this part of the country are in that position where they find the balance of power turned in favour of the European. They feel that their old *mana* and customs and power of their chiefs are gone; at the same time they have only acquired that amount of knowledge that makes them jealous of the change going on around them, without having, for the altered position in which they are placed, learnt those habits of steady industry and application of general principles for their guidance, to allow of their participating freely in the general progress. The rapid exchange of property that has taken place during the past few years put large sums of money into their hands, which, in many cases, they squandered in a most reckless manner, living at the same time an idle life without attempting to provide for the future, so that when the time came that this source of revenue ceased, and it became necessary to turn again to labour, a feeling of discontent arose, and in some instances with an appearance of reason in it, one of the causes being through the grantees getting all the proceeds of the sales or leases, and spending it themselves, without dividing it amongst their relatives, whom they were presumed to represent. An Act was passed by the Assembly, appointing a mixed Commission to inquire into the question: their report, showing the result of that inquiry, was laid before the Assembly last Session. Since the close of the inquiry by the Hawke's Bay Lands Alienation Commission, the excitement in regard to past land sales, &c., has gradually subsided, although some cases are still left which will require great care in adjusting. One of the principal causes of these troubles, as in Poverty Bay, arise from the complicated state of the titles to land, through there having been no provision made in the old Native Lands Act, although this is remedied in the Act of 1873, for the subdivision of shares in Crown grants, subsequent to some of the grantees having dealt with the land. Although a large extent of the land in this district has passed from their hands, there still remains much more than the Maori population are likely to require, care only being taken that certain reserves, actually required for Native occupation, be restricted from lease, sale, or mortgage. There has sprung up from the past repudiation movements, a league consisting of a party calling themselves the *Komiti* (Committee), whose ostensible object is to look into past land transactions, and also practically for the passive resistance to all land sales, &c., and the opening up of the country. Amongst other things, they oppose the education of the children in English. From the popularity usually attending any measure of this nature amongst the Maoris, this movement will probably gain followers—at all events for a time. With an excitable, untutored people, such movements will speedily fall from the want of organization, or end in a far different result, and more disastrous than that contemplated by its promoters. A great authority, "Maine," says, "It is characteristic both of uneducated minds and of early societies, that they are little able to conceive a general rule, apart from the particular applications of it with which they are practically familiar. They cannot dissociate a general term or maxim from the special examples which meet them in daily experience."

On the other hand there is a large party of industrious Natives in the district who cultivate extensively, paying all their attention to improving their properties and educating the rising generation. Over 2,000 bushels of wheat and 200 tons of potatoes, exclusive of maize, &c., were grown on the plains last year. There are two schools established in the district, under the provisions of the Native Schools Acts, one at Pakowhai, the other at Omahu, both of which are conducted in a most satisfactory manner, and the children show great progress in their knowledge of the English language, considering the short time they have been learning; so much so, that it is time to consider some way of providing for some of them by apprenticing them to useful trades. It will be necessary shortly to start a fresh school in the Seventy-Mile Bush, in the neighbourhood of Tahoraite or Ngaawapurua.

#### *Wairoa.*

Dr. Ormond, Resident Magistrate, will doubtless have forwarded his report for this district. I would therefore only remark that the Natives here, as in other districts where much leasing and selling of lands and much Government expenditure have gone on, more particularly for warlike purposes, have got into a slothful, discontented, drinking state, which has been taken advantage of by designing Natives travelling from other parts of the country, telling the people that they can upset all sales, leases, mortgages, &c., and persuading them to join what is called the *Komiti*, for this purpose, and also for the purpose of obstructing the pakeha power and the general improvement of the country. Some trouble and hindrance to the erection of the telegraph between Napier and Wairoa and Poverty Bay has been given, the Natives demanding payment for the wire passing over their land; but by careful explanation, &c., this has been adjusted, and the telegraph office is open at Wairoa, and the work favourably progressing towards Poverty Bay.