

A considerable number of civil cases in which the Natives were interested have been brought before the Court and adjudicated upon; and no crimes of any magnitude have been brought under the notice of the police, a member of the Armed Constabulary Force being stationed here, and whose uniform the Natives appear to hold in great respect. And I consider it a matter of congratulation that so large and populous a district as this continues to be so free from crime. I have, during the year, found it necessary to send two Natives (men of some rank) to gaol, under "The Imprisonment for Debt Abolition Act, 1874," and the result has been good, and will I trust have some effect in preventing the utter recklessness with which the Natives have hitherto obtained goods on credit, in very many instances on false representations; though at the same time I feel bound to state that I do not consider the dealers and storekeepers as being altogether free from blame in this matter.

The various Native schools in operation in this district are doing a great deal of good, and in many instances are well supported by the Natives, both in the largeness and the regularity of the attendance; but I am sorry to state that the two schools at Waima and Lower Waihou are quite deserted, which is in a measure owing to the high rate of kauri gum—nearly every Native, including the women and children, being engaged in collecting it—and also, in the case of the latter school, to the number of deaths that occurred during the spring of the year. The whole of the Native schools have lately been thoroughly inspected by Mr. Hislop, the Secretary of the Department of Education, and Mr. Pope, the Organizing Inspector, who will doubtless report fully to the Government on their condition and management.

In closing this report, I am sorry I cannot give a more satisfactory account of the state of the Natives under my charge, and can only hope that, as time passes and the Maoris become better acquainted with European habits and customs, and more alive to the advantages to be derived from a careful attention to the laws of health, a vast improvement will be visible both in this district and throughout the colony. On the other hand, if they still persist in living in their present condition, there can be only one future before them—extinction as a people—and that at no very distant period.

I have, &c.,

SPENCER VON STÜRMER,
Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 4.

Mr. E. M. WILLIAMS, Bay of Islands, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Puketona, Bay of Islands, 11th May, 1880

In compliance with the request contained in your circular letter of the 16th of March last, I have the honor to forward, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, my annual report on the state of the Natives of this district.

I have much pleasure in recapitulating the statements given in former reports, that peace and quietness continue to exist throughout the district.

In the moral and physical condition of the Natives there is but little change to notice; some are endeavouring to improve their position by adopting European manners and customs, but the majority are contented to live as did their fathers. Drunkenness is not so prevalent as formerly, a change for the better in some of the leading chiefs having had a corresponding influence upon the people. Sickiness has been prevalent, and many deaths have occurred, which is not to be wondered at when their careless mode of living is considered.

The Resident Magistrates' Courts at Waimate, Russell, Kawakawa, and Whangaroa have been regularly held, the Natives in attendance respectful in their conduct, and quietly assenting to the decisions given. Their principal occupation has been that of kauri-gum-digging, in the collection of which both sexes are engaged, the high prices lately given for this article keeping them well supplied with money.

For many months past the Natives throughout the district, at the instigation of Hongi, son of the renowned chief of that name, have been collecting funds for the purpose of erecting at Waitangi a building in commemoration of the Treaty to be called "The Treaty of Waitangi;" and, the amount from time to time collected having exceeded the sum of £700, tenders were invited and accepted for the erection of the work, and a spacious and handsome building is now in course of completion, which the Natives propose shall be opened in the month of March, 1881, when a large gathering may be anticipated from all parts of the colony.

Having been called upon by the Government to resign the office which for nineteen years I have held as Resident Magistrate of this district, in concluding this my last report I take the opportunity of bearing testimony to the marked improvement manifested by the Natives in their respect and submission to British law, their loyalty to the Government, and friendship towards the settlers.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

EDWARD M. WILLIAMS.

No. 5.

Mr. J. S. CLENDON, Kaipara, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Helensville, Kaipara, 19th April, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular No. 1, of the 16th of March ultimo, and, in accordance with the request contained therein, to report for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister as follows:—

That the Native population in the Kaipara District have, during the past year, been exceedingly quiet and orderly, and their relations with their European neighbours of the most amicable description. There has also been a general disposition evinced by them to reduce the consumption of alcoholic liquors—a fact more particularly noticeable in country places than in the vicinity of towns.