

## No. 14.

Captain PREECE, Napier, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Napier, 20th May, 1880.

In accordance with the instructions contained in your Circular No. 1, of the 15th of March last, I have the honor to forward the following report on the state of the Natives in this district:—

There seems to be a growing desire among the Natives to have their lands which have passed through the Court subdivided. I think this is a step in the right direction, and I would suggest that full powers be given to the Court to subdivide Native lands whether under lease or still in the hands of the Natives.

A new religion has been promulgated by a Native named Paora Potangaroa, from Wairarapa. A number of the Porongahau and Waipawa Natives have become disciples of the said Paora, who professes to have supernatural powers. I fear that this fanaticism will upset the minds of some of the Natives for a time, but I do not anticipate any evil consequences will arise therefrom. Natives are always too prone to believe in any new doctrine which causes excitement. Tareha and the principal chiefs have set their faces against it, and I think it is quite probable that this will give it a check, although there are sure to be some who will join the new faith from their love of opposition.

*Te Wairoa.*

A dispute arose between the Rakaipaka, of Nuhaka, and the Ngatihine Tribe, of Whakaki, relative to a piece of land situated between Whakaki and Tahaenui. This threatened to become a serious matter, and shots were exchanged between the parties: the matter was, however, settled for the present by the intervention of Henare Tomoana, M.H.R., who went from here for the purpose of arranging the question between the contending tribes.

I am sorry to say that the Wairoa Natives do not cultivate so much as they used to do in former years.

In conclusion, I may state that my report is necessarily short owing to my having only been in charge of the district since the middle of March last.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

GEORGE A. PREECE.

## No. 15.

Mr. E. S. MAUNSELL, Wairarapa, to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Greytown, Wairarapa, 23rd April, 1880.

I have the honor to report that the state of the Natives in this district is, as it has hitherto been, friendly toward Europeans, and that they are submissive to law and authority.

For many years past some have complained of the non-issue of Crown grants, others of non-fulfilled past promises of the Government, of the non-settlement of disputed boundaries between their lands, and lands ceded to the Crown without tribal authority. These subjects are being inquired into with a view to a fair adjustment.

Their attention is principally occupied by land disputes and social questions, which they inquire into and decide at meetings held periodically. These meetings are styled "committees"—constituted of no particular members, but of those who choose to meet on these occasions. Their decisions are invariably accepted, and fines imposed are paid to the aggrieved persons. Recently a committee decided against a man for eloping with another's wife, and fined him £50, which was paid by cheque upon a bank to the injured husband, the wife forfeiting also her horses to him. After having disbursed the liability under this dictum, they departed, and now live together and are recognized as husband and wife, the discarded and former husband being satisfied with the exchange. Instances of similar acts of the committee and its influence are of frequent occurrence.

Very little interest is evinced regarding the proceedings of Te Whiti or the King party at Waikato.

There is a marked improvement in the social and moral state of the Natives of the district. Hauhaism has been abandoned, and at several kaingas they are reviving Christian worship formerly abandoned for Hauhaism. Their leading men take great interest in the proceedings of Parliament, so far as questions affecting their race are concerned.

A strong objection still pervades their minds against the Native Land Court as a means of acquiring land titles, the process being vexatious and incomprehensible to them. They have on many occasions of sittings of the Court withdrawn their applications for investigations through this objection, and in anticipation of a more simple tribunal being substituted. Even now, Natives withhold their land from the operation of the Native Land Acts, except in cases of claims to succeed deceased grantees, and of disputed titles forced into Court by one party having animosity towards the other, and of mercenary motives, when sullenness and indisposition to allow the hearing to proceed on the objecting side result.

Mortality during the past year has not been in the same ratio of previous years, the only deaths being those of three or four old persons.

I have noticed children at their kaingas running about in a wild condition, the parents entirely indifferent to their state or education. I may mention that in very few cases Natives avail themselves of the advantages of having their children taught at the public schools. At Gladstone two or three attend the school; at Greytown the same.

In conclusion, I beg to state that the Natives, generally, in this district are slowly emerging from a state of political and social corruption, caused primarily by the King movement, and latterly by the Hauhau infatuation. During the years they were in that state they were decimated by death through exposure and want, and joining in the past wars. Out of a population of about 1,000 fourteen years