

ago, they do not now, I estimate, exceed 650 souls. In proportion to the European population they are in a minority of about one to fourteen. They know and express their comparative weakness. The bluster and domineering address of the past has subsided in proportion to their numerical decrease.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

E. S. MAUNSELL.

No. 16.

Mr. R. WARD, R.M., Marton, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Marton, 11th May, 1880.

In compliance with your circular letter of the 16th March last, I have the honor to make my annual report on the state of the Natives in my district. In doing so, I am glad to be able to say that the general conduct of the Natives throughout the district during the past year has been satisfactory. They have now settled down quietly to work on their farms or kaingas, or for their European neighbours; the many disturbing questions as to land are now settled, and, on the whole, their condition and good conduct afford a pleasing contrast to what it was some years ago.

The leading and thoughtful members of the tribes seem fully alive to the baleful effects of excessive indulgence in alcoholic liquors, and are everywhere making a brave stand against placing temptation of that sort before their people.

I find nearly all offences of a social or minor character are tried, and when thought necessary punished, by their own runangas. It is quite a rare occurrence to have a purely Native minor criminal case in my Court.

In February last a jubilee meeting was held at Otaki to commemorate the introduction of the Gospel among the Maoris of New Zealand. The meeting was presided over by his Lordship the Anglican Bishop of Wellington, other clergymen (European as well as Native) assisting in the interesting services held in connection therewith. A handsome pillar, some forty feet high, was erected to mark the event. I regret I was unable to be present at this meeting. I understand there was a great gathering of Natives, and everything passed off satisfactorily. I had omitted to state that, at the time of this meeting, the marble statue of Te Rauparaha (quite the Napoleon of his time, on this coast), which was placed near the pillar referred to, was unveiled.

A considerable portion of the inland road between Foxton and Otaki is being made by Native labour, many of whom have taken contracts from the Manawatu County Council, and I believe are carrying them out satisfactorily.

Some months ago, in consequence of a misunderstanding between the Foxton ferryman and Natives living on the south bank of the Manawatu River, the latter determined to stop the road over their land between the said ferry and the sea-beach. Finding that the travelling public would be much inconvenienced by this, they decided to permit travellers to pass on paying a slight toll, which, for the present, is being levied. The Manawatu County Council is, however, now taking steps to survey and lay off a public road through this land (which, by the way, has not been passed through the Native Land Court) under the provisions of "The Public Works Act, 1876." The several sections of this Act having been explained to the Natives, they have decided to give the surveyors and Council every facility in doing what is necessary by law to cause the land to be taken over for road purposes, and will avail themselves of the compensation clauses of the Act for any loss they may sustain for land so taken. As a rule, the Natives manifest very little, if any, interest in the sayings and doings of Te Whiti and his people at Parihaka: they have no sympathy with him.

I cannot conclude my report without acknowledging the valuable, prompt, and painstaking assistance I have received from Mr. S. M. Baker, interpreter of my Court at Foxton, in the many meetings and communications I have had with the Natives of my district during the past year.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

ROBERT WARD, R.M.

No. 17.

Mr. R. W. WOON, R.M., Wanganui, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Wanganui, 22nd May, 1880.

I have the honor, in accordance with your circular, to submit, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, the following report on the state of the Native population in the Upper Wanganui River District:—

The Native feeling has not undergone much change since this time last year, although, from a variety of influences, and from the fickleness of the Native mind, it more or less varies. The Native being of an observant, inquiring, and impressionable character, his opinions are more or less affected by what is going on in the outside world, particularly as he is in an unsettled state, and is for ever casting about him to conserve his interests and better his condition. The great works and undertakings and rapid progress made by his European neighbours are a startling matter to him, and ever and anon he manifests his astonishment in words expressive of wonder and amazement at the power and skill of the white man. The public works and undertakings of the Government during recent years have not been without their effect upon the Maori mind; and, combined with our military power, as displayed during the late war, have had a pacificatory influence upon the Natives, who thereby have become convinced of their impotence to contend in arms with so redoubtable a foe as the English. They are much struck with the benefit resulting from the introduction of railways and the telegraph-wire, and are quite alive to the advantages derivable from their use, and spend no little money in travelling by train and *patuing* the wire.