

tured from the *wharangi* and other poisonous plants, which are in blossom in the swamps at that season of the year. It would probably be of advantage if a short circular was circulated among the Natives generally, containing instructions as to administering emetics in such cases, and enumerating those easiest to procure and safest to use in the absence of a doctor.

OPOTIKI AND WHAKATANE.

Notwithstanding a prolonged sitting of the Native Land Court at Opotiki, which necessarily causes a large assemblage of Natives, their conduct has been quite equal to that of former years. These people continue to maintain their character for sobriety. Very few indeed have been punished for drunkenness or other offences against good order.

The Natives in these districts, though industrious and hardworking, appear to be losing ground so far as increasing their own and families' comfort is concerned. This is attributable to their Te Kooti proclivities. They have now entertained Te Kooti four different times since the amnesty. I cannot better compare these visits than to that of a horde of locusts: the effect on the people is about the same—all their industry of the whole season is gone in a few days, and they are fortunate if they pay for the feasting without hypothecating the next year's crop. Besides these special occasions there are, of course, the usual monthly gatherings, which last from three to five days on each occasion, when a further drain is made upon their resources. Such a state of things cannot but prove most injurious to these people, who are more fortunate than the tribes residing in other parts of the Bay, in possessing lands which are most fertile, and from which they could produce considerably larger quantities of grain, &c., than is required for their own consumption; but, owing to their infatuation over Te Kooti, they are simply reducing their comforts instead of increasing them. The Te Kooti-ites seem to be more industrious now than they were a few years back; but this extra industry appears to do them no actual good, as the product of their ordinary as well as extra labour is swamped in fêting Te Kooti, and in other ceremonies connected with his form of religion.

A very great difference is perceivable between Natives who are not adherents of Te Kooti and those who are—for instance, between the Ngaitai, of Torere, and the Whakatohea; the Whanau-a-Maru, of Tekaha and Raukokore, and the Whanau-a-Apanui, at Maraenui and Omaio. The Torere, Tekaha, and Raukokore people are not Te Kooti-ites—they look well-fed, well-clothed, and can put a great quantity of grain produce into the market every year; but such is not the case with the other two tribes, with whom it is a constant struggle, and who are in debt as heavily as the storekeepers will let them be.

The Natives at this end of the district who are not Te Kooti's followers are a very small minority; consequently they are treated with scant ceremony in any matters where their religious views clash; consequently these people are anxious as to the objects and ultimate results of Kooti-ism. These people, I need not say, are most anxious to have some restraint placed upon Te Kooti's movements, because, whether they are willing for him to pass through and halt at their kaingas or not, he does so, when Maori custom and etiquette compel them to entertain him and followers, much to their own loss. They have, in fact, to become hosts against their will.

Te Kooti's profession is that he is working for the good of the people; but, so far, I cannot discover one instance where his visits amongst them have been beneficial to them. They are rather the contrary, because they are causing the Natives to impoverish themselves, and I take it that whatever does that cannot be regarded as a benefit, but rather as an injury. Under the present régime all their industry appears to be wasted. The question, no doubt, is a difficult one to deal with, yet I think something should be done in the interest of the Natives to prevent these large parties rambling about the district, and demolishing the food-supplies of the various tribes at whose kaingas they choose to halt.

I need scarcely remark that during the past year the Te Kooti followers have much increased in this portion of the district. Having already reported upon Te Kooti's late visit and the occurrences arising out of the same, it will be needless to recur to that again here. The effects of Te Kooti-ism, so far, appear to have increased the inclination of the Natives to lock up their lands. It seems to be a part of their doctrine to object to surveys of their lands, to keep them out of the Native Land Court, and to do all in their power to keep them locked up.

The chief stronghold of the Te Kooti-ites may be said to comprise all the country occupied by the Urewera, the Ngatiawa, the Ngatipukeko, the Ngatimanawa at Galatea, the Tamatea at Waiotahi, the Upokorehe at Ohiwa, the Whakatohea at Opotiki, the Whanau-a-Apanui at Motu River, and the Itanga Mahoki of the Ngatiporou; besides these, the Rangowhakata, and some portions of the Ngatikahungunu, are said to be ardent adherents of Te Kooti. Of these, the Ngatiawa of Whakatane and Rangitaiki, the Ngatipukeko of Whakatane, the Tamatea of Waiotahi, the Upokorehe of Ohiwa, and the Whakatohea, have little or no land which has not been confiscated or passed through the Court. The Urewera country forms the bulk of the land which is likely to be affected if the doctrine mentioned in the preceding paragraph is really carried out. The Urewera were, however, always opposed to surveys, roads, &c. This only seems to have strengthened their opposition.

There are eight Native schools at this end of the district, at which 336 children are receiving instruction. The Natives take great interest in their schools at this end of the district. The only tribe which does not appreciate them appears to be the Urewera, who seem divided amongst themselves as to giving land for a site. They cannot get over the difficulty of having that surveyed without breaking through their much-cherished rule. A few are willing to give a site, but the majority object. Some of these schools are carried on under great difficulties owing to the migratory nature of the Natives. If the parents go away to a distance, either to plant or to harvest crops, the children generally follow: hence the attendance at one or two of the schools becomes somewhat irregular at certain seasons of the year; but on the whole, in most schools, it is pretty regular.