

1889.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS IN NATIVE DISTRICTS.

[In continuation of G.-5, 1888.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, to OFFICERS in NATIVE DISTRICTS.

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 23rd May, 1889.

I have the honour, by direction of the Hon. Mr. Mitchelson, to request that you will be good enough to forward at your earliest convenience, but not later than the 20th proximo, the annual report upon the state of the Natives in your district, for presentation to Parliament.

I have, &c.,

T. W. LEWIS, Under-Secretary.

No. 2.

Mr. H. W. BISHOP, R.M., Mangonui, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Mangonui, 15th June, 1889.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular No. 4, of the 23rd May last, and, in compliance with the request conveyed therein, I now beg to forward the subjoined report upon the state of the Natives in my district:—

During the past year the health of the Natives has, upon the whole, been very good. An epidemic of typhoid fever broke out at Waikare, near Russell, a few months ago, which proved fatal to several people, but it did not spread to any great extent; and I think that this is the only late instance of anything approaching an epidemic in my district. The principal death of note has been that of Maihi Paraone Kawiti, a famous Ngapuhi chief. He died at his residence at Waiomio, near Kawakawa, on the 21st May last. He was one of the old school, and intensely conservative in his ideas, and exercised very large influence amongst the Ngapuhi Tribe in the direction of retaining the old Maori mana.

Meetings with a view to keeping alive political agitation have been largely held throughout the district. The most important was that held at Waitangi in March. There were many Natives assembled from all parts, the attendance being estimated at over fifteen hundred. Nothing practical resulted from their deliberations; but there was a great deal of *kerero*, and an enormous consumption of food. These meetings have an undeniably bad effect upon the Natives, who impoverish themselves to make a big show, with the result that they have subsequently to undergo a lengthened period of semi-starvation.

I was pleased to notice during the past season that there was an unusually large area of ground under cultivation at most of the large settlements, and that the work had been done in a far more methodical manner than usual. It is to be hoped that the improvement in this respect will be permanent.

Shore-whaling is still extensively carried on during the season by the Natives residing on the east coast. A considerable amount of money is invested each year in the venture, and it is much to be regretted that the return is so small. The want of success is largely owing to a lack of experience on the part of the Natives.

I have never known the district so free from crime as it has been during the past year. This is all the more noteworthy and satisfactory owing to the fact that the people have been unusually poor. The two main sources of income in the district—namely, gum and timber—have been unprecedentedly stagnant, and there has been very little inducement to work.

Temperance principles still spread amongst the Natives, and their influence for good is largely felt. The difference between the existing state of things and what used to be is truly wonderful, and there is great cause for thankfulness.

The Native schools are still an important factor in the social and moral improvement of the Natives. They are fairly well attended, and considerable interest is shown by the Maoris in their welfare.

The band of fanatics at Upper Waihou, in the County of Hokianga, still keep up their absurd practices. They have lately gained further adherents from the neighbouring settlements, and without doubt constitute a disturbing element in the district. They have been repeatedly warned as to the probable result of a persistence in their present proceedings, and they are now being closely watched by the district constable. Should there be again any open violation of the law it will undoubtedly be necessary to take such steps as will insure the permanent breaking-up of the entire band.

I have, &c.,

H. W. BISHOP,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 3.

Mr. J. S. CLENDON, R.M., Whangarei, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Whangarei, 11th June, 1889.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd May last, requesting a report upon the state of the Natives within the district under my charge, and in reply thereto I would beg to remark as follows:—

With the exception of the outbreak at Poroti in June, 1889 (the full particulars of which have already been forwarded to the department), the Native population within the extended area under my supervision have conducted themselves in the quietest and most orderly manner. Their chief occupation has been in cultivating their lands and in gum-digging, at which employment they realise a fair remuneration. Their cultivations were larger last season than for several years previously; and this, coupled with the exceptionally fine weather, was productive of much benefit to them. Their schools have been fairly attended during the past period, but I regret to say that a great amount of apathy and indifference on the part of the parents still exists in not enforcing the attendance of their children at school, and which, I fear, will never be sufficiently removed from the Native mind to enable their descendants to reap fully the benefits of education. There have been four political meetings during the year—at Waitangi, Orakei, and Poroti; but the assemblage in each case was very much smaller than on previous occasions. The grievances, real or imaginary, were fully discussed; and a petition was framed at the March meeting at Waitangi to be forwarded for signature all over the country, expressing the desire of the Natives for a government of their own. The petition will, I believe, be brought before Parliament at once, although there can be little doubt that a great number of the Maoris hardly know what they really require themselves.

Several deaths have occurred in various parts of the district from the usual causes amongst a Native population, such as consumption, catarrh, typhoid fever, and old age; but the mortality has been less than in former years. The decease of Maihi Paraone Kawiti will cause a blank among the leading Northern chiefs not easily supplied from the younger men. Kingi Hori Kira, of Te Ngaere, Whangaroa, is now the only remaining chief of the old régime in the Bay of Islands District. He will be about eighty years of age.

In conclusion, I would beg to remark that, with the decease of the old chieftains and the advent of the younger generation to power and influence, a new era in Native ideas and views will arise, which, though assimilating more to European customs, will still be greatly inferior to the dignity and uprightness of the older men now passed away.

I have, &c.,

JAMES S. CLENDON,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 4.

Mr. G. T. WILKINSON, Native Agent, Alexandra, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Otorohanga, 20th June, 1889.

In accordance with request contained in your circular No. 4, of the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith my annual report on the Natives in my districts during the past year:—

During the past year—viz., from the 14th March, 1888, to the 2nd March last—I have been almost constantly engaged acting as Interpreter for the Native Land Court during its sittings at Otorohanga and Kawhia, and have not, therefore, had the opportunity of moving about in my districts and having personal communication with the numerous Natives therein, as during previous years. I am glad, however, to be able to report that there is no apparent retrograde movement either in their health or social condition during the past year. Only one chief of importance has died during that period—viz., Wetere te Rerenga, of Mokau. He was a chief of high rank, belonging to the Ngatimaniapoto Tribe, and was well known throughout this part of the North Island for the part he is said to have taken during the early days of the Native rebellion. He was a man of great energy and considerable ability, and during the last fifteen years has been a firm friend of Europeans. He was one of the very few aboriginal natives of New Zealand who was the possessor of the bronze medal of the Royal Humane Society for saving life, he having some years ago saved the life of some Europeans who were capsized from a canoe whilst crossing the Mokau Bar, and who, but for his exertions in going to their rescue, would have been drowned. He was in receipt of a Government pension at the time of his death.

Tawhiao, and those of the King party who for the past nine years have been living at Whatiwhatihoe have recently removed to a new settlement that they have formed at a place called Pukekawa, near to Mercer, and on the western side of the Waikato River. The land that they are now living upon is mostly owned by Natives, and was awarded to them by the Compensation Court many years ago out of Waikato confiscated lands. The fact of Tawhiao having removed nearer to European settlement and to civilisation, instead of retreating from it, is, I think, proof sufficient that he has no desire otherwise than to live in peace and harmony with Europeans. Several reasons may be given for his having left a district which has so long been his home, and which, through his continued residence therein, had got to be called the King-country, but I think the main reason is the fact of the Ngatimaniapoto and its sub-tribes having some years ago withdrawn their allegiance and support from him and the King movement, and their having lately brought the larger part of their land into the Native Land Court in order to have the title thereto defined in accordance with our laws. This action on their part was a direct blow at Tawhiao's supremacy as King, and in more senses than one has cut the ground from under his feet. It has generally been understood that he and the Waikato tribes had no title to the land in the King-country (except some small claims at Kawhia), so that he and they were really only living there on sufferance, and through the fact of Ngatimaniapoto being at one time his supporters and also adherents to the King movement. With that support and adherence now withdrawn, it is quite natural that Tawhiao should feel that his mana, so far as that people and their land is concerned, is now a thing of the past. Hence, I think, his removal with his few remaining adherents to another locality. Although, however, he and the main portion of his people have removed to Pukekawa, a few still remain at Whatiwhatihoe to look after those of their dead who are buried there, also their houses and some of their property, and it is understood that some of his people will return there again next season to plant wheat, &c., as, notwithstanding that the land there has been continuously cropped during the last nine years, it would appear not to be by any means worked out, as shown by the splendid crops of wheat and oats that were grown there last season, and that without the aid of any manure. Although Ngatimaniapoto have to all intents and purposes separated themselves from the King party, they have not been altogether unmindful of Tawhiao and the support they gave him in years past when they all made common cause against the pakeha. In putting their land through the Court they have set three blocks (estimated to contain three thousand acres) on one side expressly for Tawhiao and his family, to whom they have been awarded by the Native Land Court. They would not, however, allow the names of any others to be inserted in the orders of Court, thus showing that, whilst they sympathized with Tawhiao himself, they had no sympathy with the rest of the King party as opposed to the Government of New Zealand.

During the past year the Native Land Court presided over by Judge Mair, with Paratene Ngata as Native Assessor, has been sitting almost continuously at Otorohanga, with a result that over 750,000, or more than three-quarters of a million, acres of land within the Rohepotae, or King-country, Block have now been adjudicated upon. Judgment has been given in eighty-two blocks, with areas varying from 1 acre to 100,000 acres; and in the cases of most of these blocks the lists of names of owners have been sent in and finally passed by the Court. They vary in number from one (the lowest) to 991 (the highest). Applications for rehearing for eleven of these blocks have been sent to the Chief Judge of the Native Land Court; but two only have been dealt with to date, leaving nine in an unsettled state. It will thus be seen that the subdivision of the Rohepotae Block is going on apace, and that the titles to the land are quickly being brought into such a state that they can be transferred from the Native owner, who does not as a rule occupy or improve the land, to his European brother, who is waiting to get possession of it for the purposes of settlement.

For several months past surveyors have been at work surveying the blocks as represented by the original awards of the Native Land Court; and already thirteen blocks, representing an area of 283,000 acres, have been completed. But it must not be understood from this that those thirteen blocks are now available for purchase. As a matter of fact, about three or four only are so available at the present time. The surveys, so far as they are finished at present, represent mostly awards of Court that have been made in the early part of the Court's sitting during the last two years; but in many cases the blocks represented by those awards have since been subdivided by further orders of Court, and each further subdivision is represented by a separate set of owners (in some cases as many as eight or ten subdivisions having been made of one block), and it will only be after the surveys of these subdivisions have been completed, and the area of each is known, that they will be in a position to be purchased. It will therefore be seen how necessary it is that not only the outside boundaries of the blocks originally awarded should be surveyed, but so also should the subdivisions—that is, for the purpose of facilitating purchase and the settlement of the country by Europeans. I have already sent you a schedule showing the blocks that have been surveyed, and which are now in a position to be purchased; also showing those which have had the outside boundaries only surveyed, and which require still to have the subdivisions surveyed before they can be dealt with.

The blocks the surveys of which are more or less complete are mostly in the Waipa valley, and extend from the Puniu River (the confiscation-line) to Te Kuiti, the present terminus of the Main Trunk Railway; and in the case of several of the blocks the railway runs through them. Others are more or less adjacent to it. All of them are suitable for settlement, whilst some—notably the Kinohaku East Block—situated as they are in the heart of a limestone country, consist of first-class land that will grow almost anything, although some of them are rather broken, more especially as they get near to or are in the bush. On one of these blocks—viz., Hauturu East—are the celebrated limestone caves which have lately been discovered, descriptions of which have already appeared in the newspapers. These caves are said to surpass in beauty and variety anything of the sort to be seen elsewhere in New Zealand.

Although the Native owners of the Rohepotae blocks are not likely as a whole to take kindly at first to any system of wholesale land-purchase by the Government, there are, however, a con-

siderable number who are ready at once to sell their interests in one or more blocks. I think, therefore, that the time is now opportune for commencing the purchase of such blocks as are suitable for settlement, and the occupation of which by Europeans would act as a feeder to the railway. With land-purchase once started on a satisfactory basis, I do not think it will be long before the Crown will have acquired a considerable area of land in the King-country which could be thrown open for settlement.

Matters relating to the Natives within the Rohepotae, or King-country, Block, and their lands, have so far, I think, progressed as satisfactorily as could be desired. The very large area of country is quietly but surely being brought within the grasp of settlement and civilisation, and this has fortunately been brought about so far without our coming into collision, or being involved in any serious dispute, with the Native owners. The time, however, is now approaching when extra care will have to be taken to avoid as much as possible the difficulties and disputes that are always occasioned when Native lands are undergoing the process of passing from the Native owners to Europeans, and when the former, who have been accustomed to live in sole possession and with no one to disturb them, will have to admit into their midst a neighbour who is of a different race, and who is also of a more industrious, pushing, and aggressive nature than they are. History has shown us that the mingling of these two races, with their different qualities and peculiarities, is not always accomplished without considerable trouble and clashing of interests—brought about principally by the attempted amalgamation of elements that are of a rather incongruous nature—until time, and the preponderance of the good over the bad of each, has caused them to mix harmoniously together.

Previous to the Natives of the King-country turning their attention to cutting flax for the mills, a number of them—especially those living between the confiscation-line and Otorohanga—used to get a living by destroying rabbits, which were getting to be rather numerous at the northern end of the King-country. The price given by Government until lately was 3d. per skin, and whilst that price was maintained, the Natives, young and old, went to work with a will, sometimes shooting, sometimes trapping, but more frequently digging the rabbits out of their holes, with the result that Bunny has very much decreased—in fact, bade fair to be exterminated altogether; but, just as the nuisance had been got well in hand, and there was a prospect of its being kept within bounds, if not removed entirely, the department has suddenly reduced the price to 2d. per skin, which has caused the Maoris to discontinue their efforts. For they say—and the truth of the statement cannot be denied—that, if it was worth 3d. per skin to kill the rabbits when they were plentiful, the price, instead of being reduced, should have been increased as the rabbits got scarcer, because the chance of earning a living by their destruction is thereby lessened. If the flax industry increases in this district, in all probability the Maoris will take to flax-cutting instead of rabbit-killing, in which case the rabbits will be left to increase again until such time as the nuisance has assumed considerable magnitude, when, perhaps, it may then be thought advisable to again give 3d. per skin to bring about its reduction.

The dissatisfaction and complaint of the Ngatimaniapoto Tribe regarding the dispute between them and the Taupo (Ngatituwharetoa) Natives regarding the Maraeroa-Hurakia Block, which was—the Ngatimaniapoto say wrongfully—awarded by the Native Land Court to the Ngatituwharetoa Tribe, has been to a great extent removed by the Hon. the Native Minister promising the Ngatimaniapoto that a Commission shall be appointed to inquire into the matter. I was fearful at one time that this dispute would lead to serious results, as the Ngatimaniapoto were very determined, and appeared to be smarting under a sense of having been wronged—more especially the section of them under the chief Taonui. I need not here refer to the nature of the dispute, as you have already been made acquainted with it. Since, however, the promise of the Hon. the Native Minister has been given that a Commission shall sit to inquire into the alleged injustice, the Natives of this district have expressed themselves as satisfied, and are now awaiting the appointment of the Commissioners.

It is not necessary for me to refer at large to the recent attempted visit of Te Kooti to Gisborne, and what that attempt resulted in, as the whole circumstances were fully reported at the time in the daily papers. It had for some years been Te Kooti's great desire to visit his relatives and friends at Gisborne, and he has on several occasions received invitations from some of them to do so. It was, however, thought advisable that he should not visit that locality, which was the scene of his atrocities in 1869, lest the peace of the district should be disturbed. For two successive years previous to this I was successful in getting him to give up his intended visit there, but this year it seems he was determined not to postpone it any more, and would not, therefore, listen to those who tried to dissuade him from going. I am not able to give any more particulars about this matter than what appeared in the newspapers, as I was engaged at the Native Land Court at Kawhia at the time negotiations were in progress to get him to desist from going. I did not, therefore, have an opportunity of seeing and reasoning with him, although he and his people live in my district.

It is with sorrow that I have to record the death of Mr. John Aubin, medical officer for the Natives in this district. He was one of the earliest and most respected settlers in this locality and was looked upon with great affection by the Natives for his uniform kindness and attention to them. He died in February last of liver-complaint.

THAMES-HAURAKI.

There is not much to report in connection with the Natives of the Thames-Hauraki District, as, with the exception of the settlement of the long-outstanding Piako purchase, nothing of importance has occurred there during the past year. The Piako Block purchase, within that district, upon which Government had made such large advances during the last fifteen years, and for which it has been found so difficult in past years to get an equivalent in land, has at last been brought into the Native Land Court, and negotiations with the Native owners, in which the Hon. Mr. Stevens, M.L.C., and yourself took the leading part (assisted by Mr. James Mackay and myself), have resulted in the

Crown getting 45,000 acres out of the block in return for some £17,000 of advances. As I am under the impression that you will furnish a special report on this matter, I need not refer to it at any greater length here.

The Native owners of the Thames, Coromandel, and Te Aroha goldfields have for some time past been complaining of the serious falling-off of the revenue from their lands which are at present taken up for gold-mining purposes. I have, at your request, reported fully upon the matter, and have endeavoured to show that the diminution of revenue now derivable from those lands is not so much brought about because a lesser area of land is taken up than formerly, but because the Mining Act of 1886 (and regulations) has, apparently under the assumption that all goldfields lands are the property of the Crown, so altered the area that can now be taken up for mining purposes, and so reduced the leasing rents, &c., that it is only in extremely exceptional cases that it is now possible for the land to yield as much revenue to its owners as it previously has done. I have also pointed out in my report that the Mining Act of 1886 makes it legal for any one to mine on Native land within the goldfield without being the possessor of a miner's right, which provision, it seems to me, is distinctly at variance with the agreement entered into by the Government with the Natives when the goldfield was opened in 1867—viz., that every person mining for gold was to be the possessor of a miner's right, for which he was to pay £1. The Native owners of the goldfield also complain that, notwithstanding the serious reduction in the goldfields revenue, they have to pay 5 per cent. out of what they receive towards paying for the allocation of same, and for clerical services.

The four Native schools in my districts are in a fairly flourishing condition. I should have been able to have another Native school established in this district—viz., at Otoraunga, where there are a large number of Native and half-caste children—but the Education Department would not give a promise that, if the Natives gave the necessary land for a school-site, and found the required number of children, it would build a school for them. Everything was arranged, whilst a large block was being put through the Native Land Court, to have a portion (two acres) cut off for a school-site, and to have it awarded to two or three owners only in order to facilitate the transfer to Government; but when the Natives found that there was no certainty that the school would be built, although the required site might be provided and the necessary forms complied with, they objected to proceed any further in the matter, and the chance to establish a Native school there was lost for the present.

I am glad to be able to report that the record of crime and misdemeanour amongst the Natives of my districts during the past year has been very small.

I have, &c.,

GEO. T. WILKINSON,
Government Native Agent and Land-purchase Officer,
Waikato, Thames, and Auckland.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 5.

Mr. R. S. BUSH, Resident Magistrate, Tauranga, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Tauranga, 3rd June, 1889.

In reply to your circular letter of the 23rd ultimo I have the honour to furnish the following report on the Natives in the districts under my charge:—

TAURANGA.

The health of the Natives during the past year has, upon the whole, been very good—the rate of mortality not excessive. Most of those who have died have been old people. No epidemic disease has visited them. They appear to be comfortably clothed, with a plentiful supply of provisions. This season they appear to have grown a considerable quantity of wheat, which yielded a very fair amount of grain to the acre—more, really, than was anticipated at the time of sowing. This has given them heart to put down a greater extent of land in this cereal this winter. The wheat that was sold realised from 3s. to 3s. 3d. per bushel, while the average yield per acre was thirty bushels in many localities about Tauranga. The kumara-crop is very good this year, and potatoes fairly good. Unfortunately the Wairoa Native Mill is not working, owing to some mishap to some part of the machinery. This is a drawback, as it necessitates the carting of the wheat to Te Puke, a distance of nearly twenty miles. This, however, will, I presume, only be a temporary inconvenience. A great many Natives from this and adjoining districts are absent at Mercury Bay gum-diggings. No maize of any consequence is grown here. When grown it does not appear to yield or grow as it does at the eastern portion of the Bay. It, however, grows very well at Te Puke. The Natives there grow patches of it. The Te Puke Natives also intend trying wheat-growing this season.

Since the Papamoa frauds no cases of any serious offences in which Natives have been concerned have been before the Court. The conduct of the Natives has been remarkably good: only a very few have been dealt with by the Court for minor offences.

The four Native schools have been in full work during the past year. That at Te Matai, near Te Puke, has had the largest attendance. The school-teacher here has been obliged to refuse to admit scholars for want of room. The attendance averages about fifty. The total number of pupils is 185—viz., 105 males and 80 females.

Generally the Natives in and about Tauranga appear healthy, well clothed, and comfortable, and are fairly sober. They are, I think, strictly loyal, although some of them are adherents of Tawhiao, the so-called Maori King; but, as he is now only a man of very small importance, I presume the adherence of these people is simply a matter of principle, with no ulterior object in view, as

they are most law-abiding. The Pirirakau, at Te Puna, are all Kingites. These people never appear to have made any open surrender, or to have acquiesced in the land-confiscation. They have continued to occupy land at Te Puna belonging to the Government, which lately has been cut up into fifty-acre sections with a view to its being sold. Although these people have not openly acquiesced in the confiscation of their lands, yet they have made up their minds that the land is gone, and will be sold. In consequence of this, I understand, they meditate removing from that locality if they cannot succeed in purchasing some of the sections advertised. Amongst these Pirirakau are some persons who are members of the Ngatirangiwehe, a section of Arawa, who reside at Te Awahou, near Rotorua. These persons were in rebellion, and after the cessation of hostilities, instead of returning to their own tribe, remained with the Pirirakau.

MAKETU.

I have visited Maketu periodically to hold the Resident Magistrate's and Police Courts there. No serious offences have been committed: debt cases have been the principal business before the Court. No charge of drunkenness was dealt with. Here, as at Tauranga, the Natives appear to have improved in their general conduct; but whether this state of things is to be attributed to their own inclinations or to a want of funds remains to be seen. I trust, however, it may prove to emanate from themselves.

These Natives never appear to have been very great cultivators of the soil, and I cannot say I see much improvement on this score. They seem to lead a hand-to-mouth kind of existence, never having more crops than they can consume themselves. Such a thing as sending produce to market seems to be an unheard-of thing here.

The Ngatipikiao, under Te Pokiha Taranui, have a religion of their own in opposition to Te Kooti's. It is somewhat similar to his, but yet quite different in form. It is stated that Himiora te Orinui, the head prophet of this faith, is to meet Te Kooti and have a discussion with him, after which, it is said, they are to unite. At Maketu there are four different sects: a large majority, however, belong to what is termed there "Pokiha's Karakia" (Fox's Church).

During the past year the Natives here have been employed on a long cutting leading from Maketu to the Waihi River ferry, a work much required, but which was obstinately resisted by these people for some years.

The Maketu Natives for some time have not taken as much interest in their school as they usually do, but I am glad to be able to report an improvement for the better during the last few months, which I trust will continue. The Maketu Natives are very migratory, at times being at Rotoiti and Rotorua.

The Natives at Matata seem to be living in their usual quiet way, the majority growing very little more than it takes to feed them. I do not know what some of these people would do for food if it were not for the immense quantities of eels that are caught in the swamps.

The people here are mostly Roman Catholics and Te Kooti-ites. The Tawera, however, belong to the Church of England. These Natives, as a rule, are a well-conducted and law-abiding people, seldom giving any trouble. They have always taken great interest in their school, which for years past has maintained an average attendance of over fifty. The present number on the roll is forty-five males and thirty-one females.

Three Natives—young men from this settlement—a short time ago went pig-hunting in the bush. During their hunt they came across a tree which contained a hive of bees and honey, some of which they ate. The honey, it is alleged, was poisonous, and the three young men became exceedingly ill, suffering very much from convulsions. They appear to have undressed themselves and rushed into the cold stream near at hand, in which two of them were found dead, a day or two after, by the party which went to search for them. The third youth managed to find his way back to Matata in a dreadful state—a state which the Natives describe as being mad. Nothing could be gathered from him as to his companions. Had it not been for the older men recognising the symptoms as honey-poisoning, no search would have been made for his companions for a day or two. The Natives allege that honey gathered at certain seasons of the year is poisonous. I, however, do not think any honey is poisonous: the fact is, Natives eat so voraciously, and so much of it at the one time, that I am not surprised at their being ill from it. It is not only the honey that is eaten, but the wax, the contents of the cells, and bees also.

There was a similar case near Opotiki, where three Native schoolboys went out honey-hunting, leaving home without anything to eat. When they found the honey they ate ravenously of it, eating everything as they got it out of the tree. One of these was found dead in a creek; the other two recovered, emetics having been administered by some European neighbours. The three persons who lost their lives appear all to have been found in the water, which points to the fact of their having been drowned—probably while in a fit of convulsions. In the Matata case some of the search-party ate of some honey, when they likewise were taken with convulsions, from which they recovered after being placed in the creek. Having others to watch them, they escaped being drowned. Unfortunately, no inquests were held in the Matata cases or on that near Opotiki. Neither of the cases was reported to me: had they been, I doubt very much if the relatives would have sanctioned a *post-mortem*, without which nothing of importance could have been discovered. From what I can learn, I am satisfied that these persons were drowned while in the water through having convulsive fits. Strange to say, there have been several cases this autumn of what is supposed to be honey-poisoning. Five members of one family—Europeans—at Te Puke nearly lost their lives from this cause. These were very ill indeed. In this case the honey eaten was box-honey, but I believe the children partook of the wax as well. An adult native at Whakatane was nearly dead from the same cause.

The Natives have a theory that new honey at certain seasons of the year is dangerous—persons partaking of it are poisoned; but the same honey the following year is perfectly harmless. The reason given for this is the gathering of the material from which the honey, &c., is manufac-

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.

The Ngatiawa and other sections of the Natives in and about the Whakatane, Rangitaiki, and Matata Rivers are anxious to form themselves into a Committee district. These people are at present included in the Opotiki and Rotorua Committee Districts. These districts are very large, and include several tribes whose interests are not the same; nor can these Committees be expected to have much knowledge of matters affecting the tribes desirous of separation. The members of the present Committees are in no way connected with the locality or people proposed to be included in this new district. As the Chairmen of these Committees no longer receive a salary from the Government, this wish of the Natives could be complied with without any cost. The maize-crop in this portion of the district is unusually large this season. In Opotiki alone about two thousand acres have been grown, which probably will yield about seventy or eighty bushels per acre. The Natives own a fair share of this area.

ROTORUA.

There is no alteration in the habits of the Native inhabitants of this portion of the district, who still appear to depend upon the tourists for a part of their subsistence; but, of course, since the eruption which caused the loss of the terraces the amount received from this source has been greatly reduced. Notwithstanding the loss of the terraces, a considerable number of tourists have visited the thermal districts this year.

The conduct of these people has been quite equal to that of previous years. Very few of them have been punished by the Court. I regret, however, to report that a portion of these people have embraced Te Kooti's form of religion—at present the number of converts is estimated at fifty, chiefly consisting of those living at Awahou and Waikuta. For the first time, when at Rotorua last month I heard the Natives at the Ohinemutu Pa holding a Kooti-ite service; but I am rather inclined to think, as there was an influx of visitors from Maketu and other places owing to a football match which took place there on that occasion, that probably it was the visitors who were holding their evening service at the pa.

These people are not given to growing large crops—they scarcely cultivate sufficient for their own wants, and as a rule appear more indolent than the generality of Natives.

The Rotorua Native School is now closed, the Native children attending the European school. The schools, however, at Rotoiti and Te Awahou are still being carried on. The rolls at these show the number of scholars to be fifty-nine—namely, thirty-six males and twenty-seven females. The parents of the Awahou school-children are engaged in sawing timber for the bridges in the Mangarewa Gorge, which much interferes with the attendance of the children, as many of them are away with their parents.

TAUPO.

Since last December the Taupo Magisterial District has been handed over to me. I have now, therefore, some eight or nine thousand Natives under my control.

The Natives in this district appear to be making considerable advance both socially and morally. Several wooden cottages are in existence at their settlements; more are being erected; and a church, also, has been built at Mararoa. A second church is in course of erection at Omarunui. These changes have taken place owing to the residence of two Mormon missionaries in their district. There are several converts to the Mormon faith. The Mormons appear to be doing good work amongst these people. They have established a school at Orakeikoraka, which is largely attended.

At Hatepe there has been an outbreak of typhoid fever. There were fifteen cases, none of which terminated fatally.

The crops are said to have been fairly good throughout the district. The best appear to be those grown at Tauranga, a settlement at Taupo, where they have large stores of potatoes.

These Natives, like those in other parts, seem to be getting more industrious and self-reliant, but they are just as wasteful as their neighbours. A great consumption of food took place last year owing to the many parties and visitors who came to cry over the death of Te Heuheu Tukino, who died last July. Te Heuheu was probably the greatest chief in this district.

In their habits they seem to have become more sober, and drunkenness has almost entirely ceased. These people sell little or no produce: they have therefore not been burdened with much money since the land-purchasing was discontinued.

A section of these people—the Ngatiterangiata, a hapu of Ngatituwharetoa, whose chief is Tohau, a quondam leader of Te Kooti's in his former exploits—are adherents of Te Kooti. These people reside at Rotongaio. They are, however, represented as having cooled down a little since Te Kooti's incarceration. The circumstances in connection with that affair seem to have set them thinking as to the danger and risk attaching to Te Kooti-ism. His prestige appears to be on the wane in this district.

The behaviour of these tribes appears to have been exceptionally good, not a single crime being recorded against them during the past twelve months. A slight land-dispute took place between two sections of these people, which ended by one of the parties pulling up some potatoes belonging to the other. This matter is to be arranged as an ordinary case for damages for crops destroyed, a summons having been issued by the owner of the potatoes. The case, by consent of parties, is to be heard in the Resident Magistrate's Court at Rotorua on the next sitting-day of the Court.

REMARKS.

The Natives generally appear to labour under considerable disadvantage in the matter of succession to the personal estate of deceased persons, especially where moneys on deposit in banks are part of that estate. Natives frequently subscribe moneys for trading purposes—generally for carrying on a store: the profits are deposited in the bank in the names of two of their number appointed by the subscribers. In the event of one of these dying, the money lies for a long time in the bank without interest, there being no one to renew. It often happens that the Natives

appointed deposit their own moneys with that belonging to the trading venture. In these cases it is a wearisome job for Natives to obtain letters of administration. I will illustrate what I mean. Some Natives at Tekaha combined to carry on a store. Various sums were collected, with which the venture was commenced. After a while some profits accrued, which were deposited in the bank at Opotiki on fixed deposit, in the names of two of their number selected by the contributors. After a while one of these died, and about three years after his death a Native Land Court adjudicated on these claims, when it was found that the bulk of the money belonged to the subscribers, but a portion of it was the sole property of the deceased, and a further sum belonged to his co-caretaker. The Court made three orders, the surviving custodian of the money being appointed to administer the partnership portion, and two of deceased's brothers to administer what was shown to belong to deceased himself, the order for the balance being made in favour of the person whose money it was, who of course was appointed to administer. The Supreme Court, I understand, is unable to grant administration to more than one person in these three cases; therefore the Natives will probably require to obtain a fresh order before they can get possession of this money. I would therefore respectfully suggest that in cases of Native succession the law should be amended to enable the Native Land Court to deal with these matters without a further application to the Supreme Court. This might be done by giving power to the Native Land Court to assess some fixed percentage of duty which should be payable before the order was signed. I feel sure this would be a great boon to the Natives. Should the present law, however, remain in force, the Natives, after their past experience in such cases, are not likely to become depositors of their savings. Every facility should be given to Natives in these matters, so as to encourage habits of thrift. Should there be an amendment in the Native Land Court Act this session, I hope to see some provision introduced in it to meet this class of case.

I have, &c.,

R. S. BUSH,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 6.

Mr. J. BOOTH, R.M., Gisborne, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Gisborne, 1st July, 1889.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular letter of the 23rd May, 1889, requesting me to forward my annual report upon the state of the Natives in my district. Owing to my absence at Wairoa and the East Coast, holding Resident Magistrate's Courts, from the time of the arrival of your letter up to the present time, I have been unable before this to write the report.

As to the state of the Natives in this district, I think I am justified in reporting favourably.

There is an almost entire absence of drunkenness amongst them. I do not think that more than a dozen have been brought up by the police during the year on this charge.

Excepting in two instances there has been no serious crime during the year. The exceptions I refer to are the murder by Wiremu Turei of his wife Mere Turei, on the 13th July, 1888, at Waiapu, and the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Pook and their child at Mataahu, for which Haira te Piri was tried, found guilty, and executed. It is to be remarked that in both these murder cases the Natives of the neighbourhood in which they occurred gave every possible assistance to the police in endeavouring to discover and to bring the murderers to justice. In the case of the Waiapu murder, the suspected murderer having been missing for three or four days after the murder, Tuta Nihoniho, with over a hundred Ngatiporou, turned out to assist the police. They made careful search through the scrub and bush, and they found his dead body not far from where he had shot his victim: he had committed suicide. In the case of the Pook murder, also, every assistance was given. The relatives and friends of Haira te Piri, having had their suspicions aroused, gave such information to the police as led afterwards to Haira's conviction and execution.

The criminal cases throughout the whole district, and including Wairoa, for the year ending the 30th June number seventy-eight. Civil cases throughout same district and for same period in which Maoris have been engaged either as plaintiffs or defendants number 251.

Schools.—The Native schools at Tokomaru, Akuaku, Tuparoa, Wai-o-matatini, Rangitukia, Tikitiki, Kawakawa, and Hicks Bay continue to be well attended, and the pupils are, I am informed, making fair progress in their studies. The Natives at Ti, on the Waiapu, and at Horowera, East Cape, are very anxious to have schools in their villages. The advantages of education are now fully recognised by the Natives in this district.

Crops.—The past season has been a most favourable one, and the crops have been abundant and good. A very large quantity of maize has been grown, more especially about Waiapu, and there is always a demand for it in the Auckland market.

As European settlers are every year clearing and breaking in fresh country, there is no lack of work for those who will work, and good wages are to be obtained. It is safe, therefore, to say that the condition of the Natives in this district is prosperous, and this is becoming more apparent year by year in the improved appearance of their villages. Many have now abandoned the old Maori-whare style of house, and live in comfortable weatherboard houses, and at almost every village on the East Coast may be seen the neat church, the Government school, and master's residence, and quite a number of neat houses, having chimney, windows, &c., and all occupied by Natives. There are some five or six ordained Native clergymen of the Church of England on the East Coast, and these are supported partly by voluntary contributions from their several congregations.

During the past three years or so there have been two or three Mormon missionaries on the coast. They seem quiet unassuming men. They live entirely amongst the Maoris. They have made no converts among the Europeans. As they insist that their Native converts shall give up drinking and smoking, the result has so far been satisfactory. I have not heard whether they advocate amongst the Natives the peculiar doctrines for which that sect is notorious in Utah.

Te Kooti has a number of adherents in Poverty Bay and between this and Wairoa. I do not know what sort of religion they profess to believe in. One of their practices is to ignore Sunday as a day of rest: as to whether they set apart any day of the week for religious observances, I am not aware. They profess the most profound belief in Te Kooti, and until the last Te Kooti episode—which has slightly shaken their confidence—they believed him to be divinely inspired. As to how Te Kooti was invited to come to Poverty Bay in March last by some of his followers; how he determined to visit the scene of his atrocious massacres of twenty years ago, with a following of several hundred fanatics; how the settlers of this district took prompt action to prevent the threatened visit; how he was requested by the Government not to come; how he still persisted in his determination; and how, after disobeying the peremptory orders of the Hon. the Premier in starting with his large following for Poverty Bay, he was at last apprehended and brought to trial—all this being now matter of history, it is not necessary for me to say more on the subject, excepting that I am of opinion that if Te Kooti had wished to visit his relatives as a peaceable man, and had come quietly with half a dozen followers, none of the settlers would have taken the slightest notice of him. It was not fear of Te Kooti personally, but the fact that he was coming here with some hundreds of followers, which following would be enormously increased on his arrival in the Bay by his adherents here and at Wairoa, that determined the settlers to resist his coming; and the timely visit of the Hon. the Premier, and the prompt action which he took to prevent the threatened visit, and which had so successful an ending, has filled the heart of every settler in the district with gratitude to the Government who, through the Premier, so speedily and effectually succeeded in preventing what might have led to a serious disturbance, and would in all probability have thrown back the district for some years.

I have, &c.,

J. BOOTH,

Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 7.

Mr. W. RENNELL, Reserves Trustee, New Plymouth, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 10th June, 1889.

In reply to your circular letter of the 23rd May (No. 4), I have the honour to report that Native matters have been quiet on this coast during the past year, the Parihaka gatherings being a mere shadow of what they were formerly, and those who were so ready to run off there monthly at one time now seem more inclined to take to steady industry, for which there is a good opening for them in flax-cutting and -dressing, besides picking fungus, harvesting grass-seed in its season, and many other ways. They have also devoted more time to cultivating their land, and fencing it in, than for some time past. There are, of course, plenty of Natives who still believe in Te Whiti, but the feeling is not so general or so strong as it has been, and is dying out, so far as at present can be seen.

Those Natives who live between Normanby and Waitotara have been, and are, greatly agitated over the question of rent for renewal of leases which they had given to European tenants before the issue of Crown grants, the tenants now requiring revised rents, longer terms, and more secure holdings, which the Natives were unwilling to give; and the matter is being settled by arbitration, one arbitrator being appointed by the lessee, and one by the Government, on behalf of the Natives (who decline to appoint). To this course the Natives object, but are taking the matter into the law-courts for a redress of any grievance they consider they may have, feeling that the time is past for attempting any other course, and that their only real safeguard is the law.

The general health of the Natives in my district has been good during the past year, but in my opinion the mortality is still very heavy as compared with that of the European race.

I find a slight improvement in educational matters amongst them, as formerly they entirely ignored the benefits their children might gain by education, but lately a few parents have applied for admission for their children to the public schools. I hope the movement may increase, but my impression is that, Maori youthful life being of rather a precarious nature, the generality of the parents do not care to submit their children to the discipline of a school, when an early death may make all learning useless.

During the past twelve months death has removed two more of our Assessors—Porikapa, of Stony River, who lived to a great age, greatly respected by both Europeans and Maoris; and Wetere, who died at a comparatively early age at Mokau. The only stipendary Assessor still surviving is Hone Pihama, who, I regret to say, is also ailing, and now rarely leaves his village at Oeo.

I have, &c.,

W. RENNELL,

Reserves Trustee.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

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