

Appendix D.

CHIEF
COMMISSIONER'S
MEMORANDA.

8. The want of such a class of officers is now becoming more urgent than ever, in consequence of the withdrawal by the Home Societies of the Missionaries employed by them in Native Districts, who in most instances possessed great influence amongst the Natives, naturally a religious race, and strict observers of their own rites and customs previous to the introduction of Christianity. These Missionaries acted as medical men, arbitrators in cases of dispute between tribes, and in various other secular capacities; as well as in teaching the doctrines of Christianity. On these gentlemen the Government have hitherto relied for information; and their absence from the district they occupied, renders the task of governing the tribes with whom they were in communication more difficult than ever; as an evidence of which the Natives in districts deserted by the Missionaries have frequently relapsed into their previous barbarous habits and heathenish practices, and resorted to war, when it might by this intervention of an impartial mediator, be altogether averted.

I submit that the task now devolves upon the Government of making some provision, with a view to preserve by the aid of enlightened Missionaries, the religious instructions already imparted to those distant tribes; and thus maintain the influence which the religious element in the Native character affords towards the furtherance of other measures that may be devised for their Government.

9. The duties of the Political Agent should, to some extent, approximate as nearly as possible to those of the Missionary. He should possess the power of a Resident Magistrate, to enable him to determine the various cases of Native disputes that might arise in his neighbourhood; to control many of the irregularities occasioned by Europeans, who, in those remote districts, feel that they can act with impunity from being beyond the operation of English Law; and to afford summary redress in cases of cattle trespass—a most fruitful source of discontent among the Natives—to restrain which, it will be necessary to have recourse to some legislative enactment; as they have often just reason to complain that the cattle of Europeans are allowed to run at large over their lands and cultivations, frequently without a stockman to look after them, destroying the crops and doing so much damage and injury, that they often allude to this evil as one of their principal objections to the alienation of their lands to the Europeans.

10. With a view to the gradual introduction of English law into Native districts, and to the enforcement of the Magistrate's edicts, the principal Chiefs should be invited to take part in the adjudication of all cases relating to their districts, and small annuities might be granted to those who were found most energetic in carrying out these objects.

By this and other means, to which I may hereafter advert, the institution of Chieftainship, now fast mouldering away, would be recognized, and to a certain extent, upheld; thus affording a means of governing the tribes through the agency of their own Chiefs, which is evidently the most effective mode of keeping them in check and of ensuring their confidence and coöperation. A few Native policemen attached to each Political Agent, would also be found most valuable in collecting information, and generally in assisting him in carrying out his duties, and in suppressing some of the evils resulting from the violation of the laws restricting the importation and sale of contraband goods in Native districts; which, together with a stricter supervision by the Customs over the Native Coasting Trade, might prevent many of the evils that are now so justly complained of.

11. In all matters of detail each Agent should be governed by instructions suited to the peculiarities of the tribes and district to which he would be appointed.

IV.—*Individual Titles.*

12. The system of giving individual titles to the Natives is one that is surrounded with so many considerations and difficulties that I need not enlarge upon it in this communication. I would, however refer to my letter of the 4th June last, on the report of the Board of Enquiry on Native Affairs, an extract of which is herewith enclosed. If this system can be carried into effect; there will be less difficulty in doing so in the Middle Island, owing to the Native Population, and the nature of their terms, than in any other place. The machinery required for carrying out the plan there, would be, a Surveyor and a Native Commissioner, with four labourers, for a period probably of eighteen months.

V.—*Finance.*

13. His Excellency's Responsible Advisers will no doubt make provision for the funds that may be necessary for carrying out measures for the amelioration of the Native race; whose claims, as doubling the European population in number,—as possessing five-sixths of the landed property in the North Island,—as being as yet unrepresented in the Councils of the Country, although contributing a large proportion of its present available exports and revenues,—cannot fail to engage the consideration of the Government; since on the measures that may be adopted for the advancement of the Natives in their present transition state, will, in a great degree, depend their own happiness and destiny as a race, as well as the general prosperity of this Colony of New Zealand.

DONALD McLEAN,
Chief Commissioner.

September 4th, 1856.