

attempt to operate from Native centres, by means of Institutions, English in their spirit, if not absolutely in their form, devised to supply the peculiar necessities of the Native Tribes, and to secure their confidence and support.

II.—*Proposed Legislative Arrangements, "Native Districts Regulation Act."*

11. The first step in this system was to provide the machinery of a simple local legislation,—such as was indicated in Ministers' Memorandum on Native Affairs of the 6th May, 1857. This object is accomplished by the "Native Districts Regulation Act,"—which vests in the Governor in Council the power of making local regulations for Native Districts on various subjects. It is intended that the Natives in their several Villages should themselves initiate legislation upon the different subjects to which the Act extends—the Government practically confining itself to suggestion, and to reducing to shape and consistency the propositions of the irregular Native Meetings known as Runangas, which are already being held in many parts of the country.

12. The Act enables District Bye-Laws to be made for the prevention of cattle-trespass; for the impounding of cattle; for regulating party fences; for preventing disease amongst sheep; for the landing of cattle; for the suppression of nuisances; for the promotion of the health, cleanliness, and convenience of the inhabitants of Native Villages; for the prevention of drunkenness; and for the regulation of the sale of spirits; together with other regulations upon Police subjects. Matters of this kind in New Zealand are now left, it may be observed, as regards the European population, entirely to the Provincial Legislatures. But these bodies have (with trifling, if any, exceptions) properly confined themselves to legislation suited to the wants of the Settlers; leaving the care of the Natives, as a matter in which the whole Colony is concerned, to the General Assembly. The Act under consideration also enables the enactment of Regulations "for the suppression of injurious Native customs, and for the substitution of legal remedies and punishments for injuries in cases in which compensation is now sought by means of such customs." Under this clause it is hoped that the Native Taua or robbing party, which is constantly resorted to for the redress of real or fancied injuries, more particularly in cases of dispute respecting women, and which pillages indiscriminately the supposed offender and his innocent relations, may be superseded, and fall into disuse. The clause relating to the regulation of the sale of spirits will, it is expected, be taken advantage of in some neighbourhoods to render more stringent and effectual the existing prohibition against the supply of intoxicating liquors to Natives. The Act also contains a provision under which it is hoped that petty differences between Members of a Tribe respecting the occupation of common property may be adjusted.

13. It will be at once apparent how essential to any advancement in civilization it is, that some suitable law should exist upon many of the subjects just enumerated. A Native has no inducement to raise his condition by erecting a house, by cultivation of the land, or by acquiring property in live stock, if the customs of his people afford him no protection; if his neighbours' horses and pigs consume his growing corn, and the half-wild dogs, which swarm in every Pa, worry his sheep; or, what is by far the worst evil, if a Native Taua, under pretext of some real or pretended injury committed by some of his relations, is allowed, at one swoop, to dispoil him of all his acquisitions.

III.—*Proposed Judicial Arrangements, "Native Circuit Courts Act."*

14. The new judicial arrangements which appear requisite are effected by the "Native Circuit Courts Act, 1858." This Act establishes itinerant Courts of a new description as a substitute, in Native Districts, for the summary jurisdiction of Justices of the Peace. Justice will be thereby rendered more easily accessible; and the institution of Native Juries, with functions resembling those of the Leet Jury, will tend to inspire a confidence in the administration of justice which has never yet existed. A great point will have been gained, if, in the more serious criminal cases, the Natives, after a preliminary investigation before the Circuit Court, corresponding to the examination before trial conducted by Justices of the Peace, can be induced to make presentment of the offences, and to forward the offenders for trial before the Supreme Court. A Resident Magistrate specially commissioned by the Governor is to preside over the Court, assisted, as in the present Resident Magistrate's Court, by Native Assessors. The support of the Native Chiefs is to be conciliated by considerably increasing the number of these Assessors, who will receive a small annual payment. In order to check the excessive severity into which the first zeal of the Natives is apt to hurry them, a veto upon every determination of the Court is given to the European Magistrate.

IV.—*Treatment of Mixed Districts, "Bay of Islands Settlement Bill."*

15. The two measures just referred to are intended to be put in operation in parts of the country which may be described as progressive Maori Districts. Districts over the whole of which the Maori Territorial right subsists, and in which there has latterly existed (as has been fully reported to Her Majesty's Government) a marked political activity, accompanied by a disposition to resist the further extension of European settlement. There are other Native Districts still too little advanced for any measure of the kind. On the other hand, there are localities in which the population is already so much intermixed as to require a distinct treatment.

16. The "Bay of Islands Settlement Bill" is intended to meet the case of a district of the latter class. Under the operation of the Acts for the settlement of the old Land Claims of the North, and