

G. S. Cooper, Esq.—
continued.

The Hauhau superstition was also introduced from the Waikato, and was not very cordially received. About half the population took it up, but the remainder refused, and have held out steadily ever since. In consequence of intertribal quarrels about land claims, Hauhauism was to a certain extent countenanced by Te Hapuku and Tareha, the two chiefs of highest caste in the Province, who although they did not themselves join it, made no objection to their followers doing so, and the former even allowed a pole to be erected and Hauhau flags hoisted upon it at his own pa. The superstition was generally abandoned in March, 1866, when His Excellency Sir George Grey visited Napier, and, by his personal influence, induced Te Hapuku to bring all his followers, headed by his brother, into town to take the oath of allegiance and to give up their flags to the Governor. The few that remained after that were disposed of at Omarunui in October following.

As to the "present intention and effect and ultimate tendency of the Hauhau movement," my opinion on which is called for, I have no hesitation in saying that it is, like Fenianism, the bond of a party of rebels who wish to overthrow the Government of the country and drive the Pakeha into the sea, whose watchword is "New Zealand for the Maori," and whose appeals to the sympathies of the Natives are founded on the imaginary wrongs they are alleged to have suffered at our hands. Allegiance to a Maori king was found to be, owing to intertribal jealousies, a bond not sufficiently strong to unite them in a national movement, and so the aid of fanaticism was called in with what was at first undoubtedly great success. The Maori, however, though savage and bloodthirsty in war, are not a race of assassins, and the murder of the Rev. Mr. Volkner was an error in judgment on the part of its perpetrators which proved most damaging to their cause. The idea of Hauhauism was well conceived, for the nature of the Maori is eminently superstitious, and the effect produced upon those who embraced the new belief was very marked. Men whom I knew intimately, of genial disposition and open countenance, became as it were in a day totally altered—altered almost beyond recognition. They wore a settled scowl on their countenances and presented a general hang-dog expression most painful to behold; and this lasted whilst they continued to profess Hauhauism. When they abandoned it and took the oath of allegiance, the change was equally remarkable; and many of them have since told me that they never knew what peace of mind was while under the influence of the superstition, and that they really believed the Devil had for the time taken possession of them.

Of the ultimate tendency of the movement it is not so easy to speak, but I think the superstition is too gross and unmeaning long to maintain its hold on the Maori mind. I do not think the Government of New Zealand has much more to fear from Hauhauism than has that of the United Kingdom from Fenianism, to which it bears in many respects a strong resemblance.

The Natives of this district have never felt strongly on the subject of the war. They used at first to be very jealous about the frequent removal of troops at Napier, but they soon got to pay no attention to it. As to the general removal of the troops from New Zealand I have not heard any opinions expressed, except that they thought they had been removed rather too soon. They have always been with us entirely on the question of the suppression of outbreaks of rebellion on the East Coast, and have more than once volunteered to take an active part in operations at Wairoa and elsewhere.

The permanent establishment of peace is, I am afraid, not quite so near at hand as many people seem to imagine. So long as the Maori King and his party continue to exist, and so long as the wild and savage Urewera and Ngatimaniapoto inhabit the impenetrable fastnesses of the interior, so long will the country continue to be agitated from time to time by acts of predatory warfare. But I feel convinced that whatever chance there might once have been of such occurrences taking place in this Province all probability of it has now entirely passed away. Indeed, I think it is not too much to say that the East Coast, from East Cape to Wellington, may now be looked upon as safe from any fresh outbreaks, so long as the rebels deported to the Chatham Islands are kept there. The pacification of the East Coast is to be attributed, in the first place, to the success of our arms at Pukemaire, Waerenga-a-hika, Waikare-Moana, and Omarunui; but those successes would have been barren of results had it not been for Wharekauri, and should the prisoners now there, or any considerable number of them, be allowed to return before Hauhauism and Kingism have quite lost their hold on the Maori mind, I should be sorry to undertake to answer for the consequences. It is but a few weeks since a party recently returned from Wharekauri actually practised Hauhau rites in the middle of this Province. Of course this could not be tolerated, and it was sternly put down by our Natives; but the party belonged to Turanga, whither they have returned, and where they may not improbably be again carrying on their old superstitions.

Following the order of subjects as enumerated in your letter, I now come to the effect of recent legislation in respect of Native Lands, Education, and Representation.

And first, with regard to land, I think the legislation has had, so far, a most salutary and beneficial effect, and the Native Lands Court is an institution which is doing much good amongst the Maoris. It not only settles at once and for ever all disputed titles, but it settles them, as far as my experience goes, in a way which is entirely satisfactory to the disputants. It proves to them that the Government has no sinister designs upon their lands, at least upon those the owners of which choose to remain at peace and obey the law. It binds them by an additional tie to the Crown, as the source of their titles. It gives an almost absolute assurance of the continued loyalty of those whose lands are passed through it. It has been well remarked that the Native Lands Court and Wharekauri are the great pacificators of New Zealand.

I am not quite sure, however, that without great caution the legislation about lands will continue to be an unmixed success. Difficulties are already beginning to loom in the distance arising out of the powers of grantees to deal, if they please, with lands equally the property of others not named in the grants, without consulting the latter or paying them any share of the proceeds. In some instances names are inserted in the grants of persons who have no claim to the soil, but who are put in as trustees, without, however, any trust being expressed. Such persons, of course, become in law absolute owners, with the other grantees of the soil, and might, if they pleased (and I fear sometimes will) dispose of the proceeds of the lands more with a view to their own interests than to those of the real owners. These and other points of a similar nature, though likely to give rise to a good deal of