

evidently a feeling among the Natives that he does not understand when they have maladies which incapacitate them from work. The death of several of their number was attributed to their being caused to work under such circumstances. The cases of Hami Pakuru, who it was said died from the effects of work, and of Meihana, who was stated to have been kicked at Tikitiki, were instanced, as well as those of Te Atarau, Ropata, and Herewini.

Objections were also raised by the prisoners to their being ordered out, as they alleged, to work for settlers; rather, however, as I understood them, because they wished to be able to dictate terms of payment, than that they had any hardship to complain of.

On the first point, I would observe that the Natives appear, as far as I could learn, almost without exception, to be entirely satisfied with the general supervision and care which has been exercised by yourself for their comfort and good treatment, of which both on this and other occasions they have spoken in high terms. The grievances of which they complain do not, for the most part, seem to have been of so serious a character as to induce them to appeal to you on the subject.

Their allegations respecting his own conduct towards them are in a measure admitted by Sergeant Elliott, whose statement I append, and I think it very desirable that you should warn the non-commissioned officers to abstain from causing irritation by petty acts of insult and tyranny, which are wrong in themselves, and would be deeply felt even by men of less sensitive temperament than the Maoris, when in a similar position.

The difference between political offenders unconvicted of any crime, and men under sentence as ordinary criminals, may not be appreciated by those immediately entrusted with the direction of the labour on which the Natives are employed, and this consideration added to the generally low view which is taken by a large section of the community, of the relations of European to coloured races, makes watchfulness the more necessary, to prevent any abuse of power.

With regard to the second point of complaint respecting an alleged interference with their religious freedom, it appears that the wishes of the Natives have been consulted, and no reasonable indulgence as to the time and manner of their worship has been denied.

The only interference which has taken place, was on the representation some of the prisoners that Hau Hau practices were being observed. By the course adopted it would seem that an incipient evil was checked.

The evidence given to me as to the complaint respecting the examination of the prisoners by the Medical Officer, is attached; you will furnish your report to the Hon. Defence Minister on this subject.

The allegations made by the Natives generally, as to the negligence and incapacity of the Medical Officer, were reiterated to-day in your presence by the sick Natives; with these however, the statement of Sergeant Elliott, which is attached, is entirely at variance.

The Native friends of Atarau stated that he had had no medical attendance for a fortnight. Mr. Watson informed me that his complaint was consumption in an advanced stage, which had been accelerated from an injury to his back from carrying heavy weights.

Tamati Patera, who is in a very weak and emaciated condition, complained of neglect and want of medical comforts. Sergeant Elliott's statement is entirely contrary to that of both these men. They should, I think, be removed from the ground and placed on one of the stretchers. At Tamati Patera's earnest request to be allowed to return, I promised that if his health admitted of his removal by the next steamer he should then return. His relative, Horomona, who though offered the opportunity of returning to-morrow, has decided to remain to take care of Tamati, will of course accompany him. In the absence of further instructions, I have to request that you will have this promise carried out.

Without any professional knowledge, I must entirely dissent from the statement of Mr. Watson, in his memorandum of this day's date, that the old man Ropata is in good health. Mr. Shand, for whom he was working, confirms the fact of his illness.

Herewini's case appears to leave more room for doubt, but his statement that he has severe pains in his loins and is passing blood, is sufficient to call for a suspension of the ordinary routine of work.

With regard to Komaru, who has a suppurating sore on his thigh, and who stated that he had had a ball lodged in it since the battle of Waerengi o Heka, I am at a loss to conceive how he can be stated to be in good health.

It will be necessary that the greatest attention should be given to prevent any further cause of complaint on this head, and with this view Mr. Watson should leave daily at your office a list of all sick Natives, attested by the officer in charge, and giving the nature of their complaint and the remedies prescribed and supplied. I would further urge the necessity of your personal inspection of each case, and the telling off of attendants with proper precautions for securing medical comforts where necessary to each patient. If possible the Natives should be induced when sick to remove to the Hospital. I am also of opinion that Europeans should at all times be prohibited from entering the enclosure in which the prisoners' huts stand without leave from yourself. The guard should have very strict orders on this point.

With regard to the employment of the prisoners on public works, or in the service of private individuals, it appears to have been clearly understood that no work other than for the maintenance, benefit or comfort for the prisoners was allowable, till due provision had been made for these objects. I am of opinion that a larger extent of wheat should be sown for another year, and the preparation of the ground will give a mode of employment to which no objection can be raised. The wheat sent for seed last year appears to have been insufficient. If a much larger extent than was required for the use of the prisoners were grown, the proceeds of the surplus amount might be devoted to the purchase of stores of a different kind which are now supplied by the Government. I think that without introducing any marked changes, work of this character should be provided in preference to any other.

There can be but little doubt that to allow habits of idleness to be contracted would be mischievous, and tend to diminish the control which at present appears to be very good.

The evil effect which might follow upon any sudden change would, I think, render it inadvisable entirely to abolish the practice which has grown up of allowing the prisoners on their own wish to earn wages from settlers, a practice which they appear to regard with considerable favour.

Any such arrangement should be, and I understand has hitherto been made, only with your consent,