

2. All these tribes are more or less divided, a section of each being with the King party. They, for the most part, however, remain on the side which they took at the commencement of the Waikato war; the most noticeable defection being that of the Ngatitewehi, who have lately gone over to the King; while, on the other hand, many of the Tainui and Ngatitahinga, who fought against the Europeans, are now loyal. Those most remarkable for their loyalty are Hetaraka Nero Hakopa, and Hemi Matini, of Ngatimahanga, and Hone Te One, of Ngatihikairo, who have always been fast friends of the European.

There is little to remark on the Natives in and around Raglan, as since the war they have not been greatly disturbed by political questions; but with regard to those at Aotea, it is different. It has been for years the aim of the chiefs of the King party to gain over to their side the loyal Natives at Aotea, thus showing that they justly estimate the protection which these Natives form to the European settlers in the Raglan district.

Hone Te One, as the recognized head of the Kupapa in Aotea, has been tried with both persuasion and threats to induce him to join the King party. Tawhiao himself has twice, during the last year come to Kawhia with the object of inducing Hone to return to his settlements at that place, of course under the King's flag. Hone was expelled from Kawhia, where he formerly resided, by the King party, in, I think, 1868. He was then placed by Mr. Mackay, Civil Commissioner, at Motakotako, near Aotea, on the road to Raglan—this place commanding the road, and being in a strategic point of view the key of the Raglan district. He and his people, assisted by the Ngatihaua, have since built a small pa there, in which Hone resides. The importance of this position, and of Hone's services, can hardly be overrated, as I believe that his perversion to the King party, if accomplished, would be followed by that of the whole of the Aotea Kupapa, and probably a portion of those living near Raglan, which would leave the out-settlers at the mercy of disaffected Natives.

I may add that I believe it is the protection afforded by Hone and his people which has enabled the Government to dispense with an armed force at Raglan, when such has been found necessary at most of the frontier settlements.

3. About three years since the Natives in the Raglan and Kawhia districts were visited by an epidemic, a kind of low fever, which for some time kept the Native Medical Officer fully employed, and carried off a considerable number of them; but since then they have enjoyed good health, though I am inclined to believe, from the scarcity of children amongst them, that they are on the whole falling off in numbers.

4. Although the Natives have never returned to the habits of industry which they gave up at the commencement of the King movement, yet I think in this district they are improving in this respect, in proof of which I may instance that a considerable quantity of wheat was last year grown by the Raglan Natives, which had not been the case for some years previous. This was, however, partly attributable to the fact of the seed having been presented to them by the Government. Drunkenness and gambling do not prevail to the extent they once did amongst them; this improvement doubtless, however, being partly owing to their present want of money. The greater part of the land still remaining in their hands they have lately leased to different Europeans, chiefly for the flax growing on it. This has been a great advantage to them, as they receive not only their rents, but are also employed to a considerable extent in cutting flax for the various mills in and around Raglan.

It may be noticed that the Raglan Natives, in common with those in the Waikato, have lately, for the first time, shown an interest in the election of the Native Members of the House of Representatives. On the occasion of the late election they had several meetings on the subject, the conclusion to which they came being to memorialize the Government to allow them a Member for Waikato alone.

5. The outrages which have from time to time been committed by disaffected Natives in or near this district, have, at the several times of their occurrence, created considerable excitement amongst the Natives. I may instance three in the order in which they happened: 1st. The robbery of a store at Aotea by Mareha of Kawhia and Wata Taki; 2nd. The murder of Mr. Todd in the Pirongia Ranges; and 3rd. The expulsion of a schoolmaster of the Wesleyan Society from the Mission Station at Aotea. In each of these cases the Kupapas have expressed great indignation at what occurred, and willingness to assist the Government in any way in which they might be called on to do, and have appeared eager to fight on the side of the Government, and in support of law and order.

I may add, in conclusion, that the Natives in the Raglan District are particularly desirous of being employed in any public works which may be carried on by the Government.

I have, &c.,

HERBERT W. BRABANT,

Clerk to the Bench, Raglan District.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Alexandria.

No. 16.

Mr. BRABANT to the Hon. D. McLEAN.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Court, Raglan, 20th March, 1871.

I have the honor to inform you that two Natives, Te Tumuhua (Ngatihaua) and Rimakaho, have just visited the Kupapa of Aotea and Whaingaroa, having been sent, as they assert, by the King's runanga to try and induce the Waikato Kupapa to join the King party. Their argument is, that the Ngatimaniapoto and other tribes being no longer followers of the King, it behoves all the Waikato to rally round him. It is doubted by some of the Natives whether Te Tumuhua was, as he says, sent by the King's runanga; but however this may be, he has met with no success whatever in his mission.

I have, &c.,

HERBERT W. BRABANT,

Clerk to the Bench.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Auckland.