

country, and closing a whole district to permanent improvement, and others having none to live on; and if lands could, as far as practicable, be paid for in Government annuities, and arrangements made for a cheaper and more systematical system of survey, much discontent might be prevented.

A summary digest of all Acts of the Assembly, bound and circulated, relating to Maoris, with an explanation in English and Maori, together with some simple rules for guidance in Magistrates' Courts, in purely Native districts would be of great use. The present feeling or condition of the Native mind, as it is called, has on the whole generally improved during the past two years, and a more general confidence prevails; although local causes of uneasiness and discontent exist on particular points, and to some of which I have already referred. Viewing the present moral and physical state of the Maoris, from my limited means of observation, it would be difficult for me to judge as to their decrease or otherwise. There cannot, however, be any doubt but there is an apparent decrease, which may be partly accounted for by the increase of the European population changing their relative numbers and consequent position. A careful census made every few years, and a register kept in each district, the result to be published, with other returns of a like nature, would soon solve this question.

The Maori is now in a transitory state, and is on his trial, whether he will ever realize the fact, that he must turn to work in earnest if he would raise himself to compete on fair terms with the European. Could the disposal of their land be so regulated that its alienation be continued over a lengthened period, it may be that the Maori would, during the interval, acquire that discipline of the mind and habits of industry and obedience to the law that would reconcile him to that change that must sooner or later take place to fit him for a higher state of civilization.

I have, &c.,
S. LOCKE.

No. 37.

Mr. J. BOOTH to the ASSISTANT NATIVE SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Foxton, Manawatu, 12th September, 1872.

I have the honor to report the satisfactory termination of a Native meeting held by the Ngatiraukawa Tribe, at Ihikaretu, on the Manawatu River, and which meeting I was instructed by the Hon. D. McLean to attend for the purpose of reporting proceedings thereof to the Government.

I have taken full notes of the speeches of the different chiefs, which I will forward by the next mail from Whanganui.

I will merely state now that I consider the meeting to have been one of considerable importance, and the result highly satisfactory.

The first subject brought on for discussion was an invitation from Tawhiao (Maori King) and Rewi Maniapoto to Whiti Patato (Wi Hapi); and another from same parties to Ihakara Tukumaru, and all the hapus of the Ngatiraukawa Tribe, to return to their land at Maungatautari and to leave this district. This subject was gone into very fully, Whiti representing the King party, and trying to induce the tribe to migrate, urging as one reason for so doing, that all the land now occupied by the Ngatiraukawa is being sold, and that a considerable portion of it is claimed by the Muaupoko, Rangitane, and Ngatiapa Tribes.

In reply, Ihakara Tukumaru, and the other chiefs representing the Government party, stated most emphatically their refusal to entertain the idea of leaving this part of the country. They said that similar invitations had been sent at different times, and generally responded to by a portion of the tribe; that the invariable result had been to induce those men who had gone to take up arms against the Government, and bring trouble on themselves. Ihakara, as Whiti's superior chief, said, "I forbid your going to Waikato to stay there; you can only be allowed to go on a visit, and return."

Whiti, in reply, said: You, the Government party, are the men who have brought trouble on the land, and you must blame yourselves if any trouble hereafter arises. You are the people who are sacrificing the country:—1. By the sale and lease of lands. 2. By allowing roads to be made. 3. By allowing the telegraph to go through the country. He said the tribe was not invited to return for war, but for the peaceful occupation of the land of their ancestors. He hinted that a time might come when, after having sold all their lands here, they would not be allowed to return to Maungatautari, even if they wished to do so.

The friendly chiefs, by way of reply, stated that they should appeal to the Government to protect their interests in the Maungatautari country; they are going to send by this mail the boundaries of land (unconfiscated) which they claim, together with a list of the claimants. This talk lasted two days; after which, certain resolutions, of which the following is a full translation, were submitted to the meeting:—

1. All disputes about titles to land shall be submitted to the Native Lands Court, the rule which shall be final, and the losing party shall not bear malice or give trouble on account of an adverse judgment.
2. Murderers, whether chiefs or common persons, shall be given up to be tried by law.
3. If the Maoris at any time feel aggrieved by the oppression of any of the laws of the Government, the matter shall be referred to their representative in Parliament.
4. The Hauhau form of religion adopted by certain members of the Ngatiraukawa Tribe to be given up, and those members to return to their former religion. Churches now out of repair are to be repaired, and teachers appointed in each village.
5. That certain chiefs of the Ngatiraukawa Tribe be set apart for the purpose of upholding the laws of the Government, and securing the better conduct of the people in their several hapus.

All the resolutions above-mentioned, with one exception (No. 4), were adopted unanimously. With respect to No. 4, many of those professing Hauhauism declared their intention to return to their former religion; others claimed liberty of conscience, but stated that if any of their people wished to give up Hauhauism they would not be prevented doing so.