

from the itinerant teacher. Some small allowance would have to be made to the Native teachers, and for providing school requisites.

At an Ordination service, held in the Waitara Chapel last March, by the Bishop of Auckland, a Native named Eruera was ordained deacon, for duty in the archdeaconry district of Taranaki. I trust that a main part of his duties will consist in giving instruction to Maori children. I may mention that the funds for the payment of the deacon's stipend for some time have been raised by the settlers. Wherever possible, I would suggest that free schooling in English should be provided for the children of the better class of Natives, in order that as many as possible may grow up with a knowledge of the English language, out of whom it may be hoped that some at least will be found to assist in raising the race to the condition of a civilized people.

The Under Secretary, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

R. PARRIS, Civil Commissioner.

No. 13.

The RESIDENT MAGISTRATE, Upper Whanganui, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Whanganui, 16th June, 1874.

I have the honor, in accordance with the direction of the Hon. the Native Minister, as contained in your circular letter of the 24th of April last, No. 3, to send in the usual annual report on the state of the Natives in my district.

As to the state of Native feeling generally, I find that it is a matter upon which much can be said, and I shall therefore somewhat enlarge upon the subject. The anxiety and excitement which resulted from the late hostilities have entirely subsided, and the Maori mind, ever active and ready to seek for occupation, has found abundant means of employment in the various questions now agitating the country, paramount among which is the all-absorbing topic of the proper administration of their landed estates.

They have, as a first step in the matter (and a very necessary one too), commenced to adopt measures whereby all tribal differences as to boundaries, &c., may be adjusted; and in April last a highly-important meeting was held at Putiki, whereat an arrangement was come to by Major Kemp and Renata Kawepo, as representing the Whanganui and Ngatikahungunu Tribes, whereby the disputed tribal boundary of the Murimotu country is likely to be settled; said chiefs having consented to take charge of the survey of said boundary line, as in a manner agreed to at the great meeting at Kokako in 1860, and to use their united influence in settling individual claims of members of each tribe to land on either side of such boundary. The visit paid by Renata Kawepo and other Napier chiefs on that occasion is likely to be attended with satisfactory results, as a friendly feeling has sprung up in consequence between the tribes, which will, in all probability, result in a final arrangement being come to as to the subdivision of this tract of country amongst them.

A meeting attended with like results was held at Waitotara in March last, when an understanding was come to between the Whanganui and Ngarauru Tribes as to their boundary line in respect of land situate between the Whanganui and Waitotara rivers, which had been in dispute for many years. Over and above this, several local land disputes have been amicably settled by friendly discussion amongst the Natives themselves, whereby quarrelling has been prevented. I was present at two important meetings of this kind on the Whanganui River in November, 1873, and February, 1874, where very serious differences were arranged, and a breach of the peace prevented. The Government lent its support to these meetings, which have had a good effect; and these amicable discussions of serious differences amongst the Whanganui and other tribes, in respect of their individual and tribal lands, have so far resulted in satisfactory arrangements being come to by the disputants, and serious complications and troubles have been averted.

The land question has again become of paramount importance to the Native mind, and agitates and perplexes them in an inordinate manner. Owing to the enhanced value of lands in these districts, in consequence of the extension of European settlement and Government expenditure, and an increased demand resulting therefrom for further acquisition of territory, either by purchase or lease, the Natives are becoming every day more alive to the value and importance of their landed estates, and an evident anxiety exists as to how they can best administer the same, so that they may secure in perpetuity a large portion of their landed property for the benefit of themselves and their descendants. There is a feeling abroad (which is encouraged by certain chiefs who ought to know better) to put a stop to land selling altogether, and only to lease; but this determination cannot be maintained, as there are many who are not indisposed to sell at a fair price, to procure money to satisfy their increasing wants and to meet their many liabilities and engagements, for the Maori of to-day finds far more means of spending money than formerly, having greater expenses to keep up, both ordinary and extraordinary. At present they are monopolizing immense tracts of country without deriving any benefit therefrom; and I have frequently pointed out to them the desirability of disposing of large portions of their lands to the Government, so that the same might be opened up to European settlement, whereby an enhanced value would be given to those portions of their reserved estate deemed requisite to meet their wants, and enable them to maintain an independent position in the country. Over and above which, by stipulating for certain reserves (in both town and country) in all lands hereafter ceded to the Crown, a further source of income would be secured to them, and ample means provided to support them in ease and affluence for all time. Thanks to the Government, the Acts more immediately affecting their interests, viz., the Natives Reserves Act and Native Lands Court Act of 1873, have been translated and widely circulated amongst them; and those who have taken the trouble to read them for themselves cannot but admit that their interests are in every way protected by such measures; and it now remains for them to take advantage of such wise and liberal legislation for the purpose of getting their titles definitely settled, and their lands so apportioned as to do ample justice