

Civil cases same period :—

Between Europeans and Natives	..	..	..	..	10
„ Natives and Europeans	..	..	..	..	4
„ Natives only	..	..	..	..	3
Total	..	..	..	..	17

The Under Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
W. B. WHITE,
Resident Magistrate.

No. 3.

Mr. S. VON STÜRMER, R.M., Hokianga, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Hokianga, 12th May, 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your circular letter of the 23rd March, in which you request me to forward my annual report on the state of the Natives in this district before the end of the present month.

In complying with the above request I have to inform you that since the date of my last report there is but little change to record in the conduct or condition of the Natives residing in this district. As hitherto, they continue to behave themselves in an orderly and peaceable manner. The number of cases brought into the Resident Magistrate's Court during the last twelve months, in which Natives have been concerned, are eight criminal. This list does not include any very serious offences—viz., one petty larceny, one cattle-killing, four assault, and two vagrancy. Also, forty civil cases; and every judgment given has been most promptly settled.

The health of the people has been comparatively good; and though last October I had to report the death of Wiremu Hopihana te Tahua, an Assessor and chief of Ngapuhi, of high rank, and to whom had been presented a medal for distinguished valour during Heke's war, no other chief of note has passed away. There has been no period in which the Natives have been so free from sickness since I have been here as during the past year: in many of the settlements, more particularly in the Waima Valley, the births have far exceeded the deaths in number.

There have been several intertribal disputes about the boundaries, survey, and ownership of lands, and, though they have given me some little anxiety and trouble, they have in every instance been peaceably and satisfactorily settled.

In agriculture, as has been for many years the case, they are very backward, not growing sufficient food to supply themselves, and large quantities of potatoes, meat, and butter are imported from Auckland, Canterbury, and other ports. Twenty years ago there was a large export of wheat, maize, potatoes, and other produce from here, but this has entirely ceased, owing partly to the increased indolence of the people, and partly to the fact that a large number of them are engaged in the forests squaring and felling timber and digging kauri gum, of which articles there is a large export.

Drunkenness, though still far too common in this district, is not by any means so prevalent as formerly. There has in this particular been a great change for the better in the conduct of the European residents (who are rapidly increasing in numbers), and the example thus set is having a corresponding influence on the Maoris.

The Native schools in operation in this district are doing good work, and making themselves felt; and, though there has been a trifling falling off in the attendance, they are still a great success, and well supported by the Natives. During the last year the large sum of £91 10s. has been paid in shillings by the parents of children attending, in school fees. As I have written fully on this subject so recently, I shall refrain from making any further report at present.

On the intelligence of the death of the late Sir Donald McLean, in January last, becoming known, the feeling of regret and affection expressed by the chiefs and others in this district was universal, as that gentleman was looked upon as a personal friend by almost every one here.

The Under Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
SPENCER VON STÜRMER,
Resident Magistrate.

No. 4.

Mr. E. M. WILLIAMS, R.M., Waimate, Bay of Islands, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

Resident Magistrate's Office, Waimate, Bay of Islands,
12th May, 1877.

SIR,—

In forwarding my annual report on the state of the Natives of this district, I have but little information to give beyond a recapitulation of former reports, the Natives continuing as usual peaceable and loyal, quietly pursuing their ordinary avocations, undisturbed by any excitement calculated to affect the even tenor of Maori life.