

source of income and wealth to their enterprising owners. Strict rules have been laid down so as to prevent any intermingling of the flocks, and every precaution taken against the inroads of disease. Every facility will be afforded for the inspection of the sheep by the duly-appointed officer at Wanganui, and no objection will be made to paying the tax. Already Mr. Hickson has inspected the Parikino flock, and issued a clean certificate. It is to be hoped that the price of wool will soon rise again, so that our Maori neighbours may obtain good and paying returns for their wool, and thereby be encouraged to persevere in carrying out another branch of industry and opulence.

The growth of hops, notwithstanding the many discouragements experienced by the cultivators, is still persevered in; and, through the liberality of a Wanganui gentleman—a Mr. Ketley, late of the Indian Marine Service—I obtained, gratis, some 30,000 sets, which I distributed amongst the Tuhua settlements, and next season they will have an abundant crop. Measures will have to be taken to meet the expense of erecting an oast-house or kiln for drying purposes, whereby the hops will be rendered a marketable commodity, and meet with a ready sale at a paying price to the many breweries in Wanganui and its neighbourhood.

The mulberry trees are on the increase; and I have been promised a good supply of grain from New South Wales, to be distributed next spring amongst those Natives who are willing and anxious to try their hands at this paying branch of agriculture. The Indian and Californian forest-tree seeds, supplied by the late Sir Donald McLean, have received every attention from the chiefs to whom they were given, and a goodly number have come up and will be cherished as mementoes of Te Makarini, the late friend and protector of the Maori race.

I would again urge upon the Government the desirability of further fostering industrial pursuits among the Natives by starting a nursery at some choice locality on the Wanganui River, where the many products of other climes might be raised and spread to other parts, to the great benefit of future generations of both races. Upon some pecuniary and other assistance being given, a competent person could soon be met with to embark in this useful and patriotic undertaking.

Touching matters of acclimatization, the pheasant has now become quite numerous on the Wanganui River, and the Natives look with some interest upon the introduction of this and other birds, although complaints are made of the destructive habits of the pheasant, which bird makes considerable inroad upon the corn crops of the Maoris. In fact, nothing seems to come amiss to the rapacious maw of this hardy bird.

Inquiries have been made about European fish, the success attending the placing of carp in Lake Taupo having given the matter a prominence in the Native mind; and the time has now come for the introduction of salmon ova in the beds and calm waters at the source of the Wanganui and its tributaries.

No fresh public works have been undertaken in Maori districts this year; but, as settlement extends, better means of communication will have to be found, and the Maoris will be most ready to assist in executing works which will more immediately benefit themselves.

The traffic from Wanganui River to the Murimotu Plains is on the increase, and the present bridle-tracks will have to be improved, so as to afford a more ready and available means of transport of goods and produce to and fro, and to town.

The Paraekaretu Block is now coming into repute, and the occupation of same by thriving and industrious settlers will be the beginning of the advance yet to be made into the far-famed Murimotu Plains and other parts of the interior, which only require the hand of man to turn them into smiling fields and populous neighbourhoods, abounding in natural wealth and happiness. The development of these inland tracts of country is a matter of great moment to the colony, and every effort should be made to foster and promote settlement in these parts.

Finally, as to other matters likely to prove of interest to the colony, I would here mention the "Moffatt case," which was tried at the late sittings of the Supreme Court here, presided over by his Honor Judge Richmond. I had been long made aware of the traitorous proceedings of said European in the interior—at Mokau, Waikato, and Tuhua—and numerous reports reached me of the quantity of powder being made by him for the Maoris, besides the repairing of arms. Fortunately, owing to his interference with the contractor for the Tuhua Flour Mill, he incurred the displeasure of Mamaku's people, including the chiefs Tuhiaia and Paiaka, who informed against him, and undertook to execute a warrant for his apprehension on the charge of manufacturing gunpowder without a license. By the instrumentality of said chiefs the culprit was secured, and a quantity of the manufactured article produced for the purpose of prosecution. Suffice it to say that the crime was brought home to him, and a conviction obtained for a breach of the Arms Act, in committing a misdemeanour, and the inadequate punishment of two years' incarceration at Wellington awarded—that being the severest punishment that could be inflicted in terms of the Act. His Honor the Judge denounced in a marked and forcible manner the enormity of the crime of which Moffatt had been convicted, and the just punishment he deserved, viz., that of the halter or gibbet, which was not too severe for so murderous a crime, involving the supply to a semi-barbarous and merciless foe of the means of carrying on rapine and destruction at and upon the frontier settlements of his unoffending and unprotected countrymen. I am led to believe that said white man has succeeded in making large quantities of serviceable gunpowder, in which he carried on a profitable trade amongst the Waikato, Mokau, and Tuhua tribes, and that considerable quantities have been stored at convenient places, to be used against road or railway projectors, at the advice of the scoundrel Moffatt.