

The high price of kauri gum has not only found employment for many Natives of both sexes residing in my district, but has attracted some two hundred from other parts. The cutting of flax finds employment for Natives living near the Waikato River; they contract to supply the mills at so much per ton. A few are employed by the day, but, as a rule, they prefer contract work.

The crops during the past year have in some parts been good, in others only middling. The Ngatitahingas living on the West Coast have had good crops; the Ngatimahos and others, settled in the neighbourhood of Mercer, have had indifferent ones, and in no case will they have any surplus for sale.

Owing to the large gathering of Natives to lament over the death of Nini Potaua Kukutai, at Taupiri, the Ngatitipas must have consumed most of their winter's stock. On the 5th April last some five hundred Natives were assembled; they consumed and divided 10 tons of flour, several tons of potatoes, and one hundred pigs, besides kumaras and fish. Major Te Wheoro was the principal chief present. He and Hori Kukutai spoke to the Natives, advising them strongly to remain quietly at their own settlement until interfered with by the pakehas or Natives, and not to listen to those who advised a contrary course. This was said in reference to the great desire the King party have shown—trying to persuade them all to remove and reside at Hikurangi, and to do so before the great flood comes. The Hauhaus present—about one hundred—did not speak in opposition to Major Te Wheoro and those on his side.

There are no Native schools in my district. The one opened at Waiuku some time ago has been closed, the Natives not showing any disposition to foster it. The public school at Mercer was partly built with money furnished by the Native Department, thinking that Native children near Mercer would attend: such has not been the case. A few attended for some time. At present there are no Native children attending the school.

The Natives have been tolerably healthy during the past year, and have not been afflicted with any epidemic.

A portion of the Ngatikahu and Ngatiamau hapus have lately returned to Te Onewhero, and have commenced cultivating crops for a permanent residence.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS JACKSON, R.M.,

Papakura and Waiuku Districts.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

No. 8.

Mr. H. W. BRABANT, R.M., Tauranga, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Tauranga, 15th May, 1880.

I have the honor to make, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, the following report on the state of the Natives in the Bay of Plenty:—

1. *Tauranga District.*

This district being now what may be termed a settled European one, there is little change to remark in the condition, habits, or behaviour of the Natives from year to year. They have this season had fair crops. They have not been visited by any epidemic disease, and I think the rate of mortality has been below the average. The Government Surgeon has given them medical advice free as usual, and hospital comforts have been accorded them when necessary. One chief has died, Hamiora Tu, who deserves a passing word, as during the time when all his tribe fought against us he remained loyal, and has from time to time done good service to Government. The Natives in this district have, during the past year, received from Government considerable sums in payment for purchased lands; but, I fear, owing to their neglecting their ordinary avocations to attend the Land Courts, and to their squandering the money when they get it, it has really done them but little good.

They appear to become year by year more amenable to the ordinary operations of the law. I may remark that during the last few months I have been able to carry through with but little opposition the survey of the Tauranga and Cambridge Road *via* Kaimai, a project which has been repeatedly tried before but opposed by the Natives. They are now willing to work on roads for the Government, and I hope that in reporting next year I may be able to mention works of this kind completed by them.

In the Police Court, Tauranga, there have been twenty charges brought against aboriginal natives during the past twelve months: of these, eighteen resulted in summary convictions. Two of these were for larceny, seven for assaults, four for drunkenness, and five for other offences. In the Resident Magistrate's Court Maoris were either plaintiffs or defendants in fourteen cases.

In the boarding establishment for the sons of Native chiefs at Tauranga, there are now twelve boys who attend the European district school, and most of whom are as advanced as Europeans of a similar age.

2. *Maketu District.*

I have visited Ohinemutu once a month during the past year, and Maketu several times. The Natives have not had such good crops as usual, and throughout the year have been badly off for food. This is no doubt owing in a measure through their having had to attend Land Courts, and given much of their time to discussing the subject of the disposal of these lands. The Resident Magistrate's Court sitting at Ohinemutu, and (more rarely) at Maketu, has had many Maori disputes before it during the past year. Seventeen civil cases were tried in which both plaintiff and defendant were Maoris, and eleven in which one party was a Maori and one a European. The Natives dealt with in the Police Court were—seven committed for trial for indictable offences; seven charged with assault (generally with assaulting another Native), two of whom were dismissed and the rest convicted; there were two convictions for larceny, and two for minor offences. Drunkenness, I think, is less common than formerly. The Natives have shown every disposition to submit to the decisions of the Court.