

1881.

NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS IN NATIVE DISTRICTS.

[In continuation of G.—4, 1880.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, to OFFICERS in NATIVE DISTRICTS.

(Circular No. 15.)

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 23rd April, 1881.

I have the honor, by direction of Mr. Hall, in the absence of Mr. Rolleston, to request you to be good enough to furnish your annual report upon Native affairs within your district, to reach this office, if possible, not later than the 31st May proximo, in order that it may be printed for the General Assembly

I have, &c.,

T. W. LEWIS,
Under-Secretary

No. 2.

Mr. G. KELLY, Mangonui, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Mangonui, 16th May, 1881.

In compliance with your Circular No. 15, of 23rd ultimo, I have the honor to submit the following report upon Native affairs within my district:—

Loyal and obedient submission to our laws has in general been the characteristic feature of Te Rarawa Tribe.

During the past year only two occurrences worthy of note have taken place. The first (already reported in my letter No. 56, of 11th June, 1880) an attempt on the part of the Natives of the northern portion of the district to inaugurate a new system of self-government, to be carried into effect by twelve men appointed at each of the principal settlements; to have power to hear and determine all cases of either civil or criminal nature, and no cases were to be taken into our Courts of justice. The chief cause of these disloyalties arose from a strong prejudice on the part of the Natives to the dog and sheep taxes, actively being enforced within the district about the time. Several Natives had been summoned under the former Act, and were fined 5s. each and costs; and under the latter several were threatened. Immediately I became aware of the turn affairs had taken, I took the matter up, and succeeded in stamping it out entirely, with the assistance of a few staunch Native friends, one in particular worthy of mention, Reihana Matiu, of Kaitaia, whose praiseworthy conduct I reported on 23rd July last, letter No. 74.

The other occurrence was a disturbance which took place at Ahipara a few days before Christmas, amongst three hapus of Te Rarawa Tribe, arising out of a dispute about land. This assumed so serious an aspect that the Natives had taken to arms, and were very much embittered against each other. I received an urgent message from Timoti Puhipi, head chief of Te Rarawas, requesting me to go to Ahipara at once and settle, if possible, the difference, as they were on the verge of war. Accordingly, on the 24th December I proceeded to Ahipara, and on the early morning of the 25th I sent messages to the hostile parties, requesting them to assemble at Ahipara. At 11 o'clock I opened the meeting. There were about 300 present. They talked very excitedly, growing more so as the day advanced. At about 5 o'clock I began to despair of being able to settle the difficulty. It all at once occurred to me, "What a way to be spending my Christmas!" I at once put the thought into words. Suddenly interrupting the meeting, I drew their attention to the day and its commemorations. This had a magic effect upon them, and was the means of enabling me to bring about a reconciliation and a happy termination to the whole affair. The Natives have now returned to their former quiet.

Little or no interest was taken by our Natives in the late Waitangi meeting. On the contrary, they viewed it with suspicion, seeing in it too much of a spirit of opposition to the present form of Government.

The County Council and Public Works Department have furnished employment for many of the Natives. They excel at bridge- and road-making, and do their work cheaply. The gum fields still continue to attract them during the summer months, but not so much so during winter months; they study their comfort more now than in former years.