

In the Bay of Islands District the Natives, as a rule, save in exceptional instances, are somewhat poorer than their northern neighbours. This district includes the settlements of Whangaroa, Waimate, Kaikohe, and Whangaruru, and the people are of the subtribes of Ngatihine, Ngatirangi, Kapotai, Ngatiwai, Uriohau, and Ngatitautahi. Taken upon the whole, they have hitherto been well-behaved and amenable to law, but several disturbances have occurred amongst them during the past year, arising in the Kaikohe District: in fact, the principal disturbances for some years past have, in nearly all instances, emanated from thence. Their employment consists in gum-digging, labouring for mill-owners, squaring timber, &c., and cultivating their land in a small way. They purchase the principal portion of their food from Europeans, and only raise potatoes, maize, &c., themselves, not as formerly growing sufficient agricultural produce to supply the settlers.

Whangarei.—This is the smallest of the four districts under my supervision, and the Natives, numbering between four and five hundred (with the exception of two Hauhau colonies, of about forty persons, who cause much trouble and annoyance) are well-behaved and orderly under the influence of their chiefs Taurau Kukupa and Hona te Horo. No disturbance whatever has occurred amongst them during the year. Their school at Pouto is fairly attended and progressing. They occupy themselves chiefly in cultivating, gum-digging, and felling and squaring timber for the Wairoa sawmill-owners; are generally well clothed and tolerably healthy.

In Kaipara, the largest of the four districts, the Natives at Wairoa, or north-western portion, are chiefly Barawas; their occupations are principally gum-digging and timber-labouring. They are in better worldly circumstances than any other Natives of the North; are better clothed, but are also exceedingly improvident and lavish with the large sums they obtain from the mill-owners and gum-buyers. Their school at Hoahanga was closed a short time since in consequence of the meagre attendance.

In Otamatea the Natives resident are principally of the Uriohau and Ngatirango branches of the Ngatiwhatua Tribe, and, like their neighbours northward, occupy themselves in cultivating and gum-digging; are well-behaved and decently clothed; are also moderately healthy. The Tanoa and Parirau schools are fairly attended, and the children improving in their studies.

In Kaipara proper the Ngatiwhatua Natives are exceedingly orderly and, although some minor obstructions to roads, &c., occasionally crop up, nothing of any moment has taken place during the past year. Altogether I consider they are the quietest and most loyally disposed Natives north of Auckland. Their census returns show a slight increase of 25 in 900, but many of the older members of the tribe have died off.

I have also much pleasure in observing that drunkenness has materially decreased amongst the Natives in the North for some time past, and this has probably been the means, in some measure, of the small increase in numbers given.

There have been but few instances of crime amongst them since my last report, some of which, however, have been dealt with in such a manner as to prove to them the necessity for obeying the law.

In March last the largest meeting of Natives that has occurred for some twenty years in the North took place at Waitangi, in order to commemorate the forty-first anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. At this meeting a number of resolutions were brought forward in connection with foreshores, Native Land Courts, fisheries, &c., but which, from the want of unanimity amongst them, nearly all fell through.

The Bay of Islands people, from their longer intercourse with the Europeans and the greater facilities they have possessed for education, should certainly be the most civilized of all the Native people in New Zealand; but I regret to say that this is not the case, and that in many instances they are far behind some of their southern neighbours in loyalty and improvement. This is evidently the result of influence exercised over the minds of some of the most ignorant by a few of the partially educated, who, like aborigines in general when a small amount of erudition has been attained, imagine themselves beyond the need of further tuition, and disseminate their own peculiar and erroneous ideas upon European actions and matters amongst their friends. But, notwithstanding any minor disputes that may arise between the Natives and Europeans or the Government, I feel convinced a judicious firmness exercised towards them, with moderate concessions when considered advisable, will prove effectual in preventing any serious outbreak beyond perhaps an attempt to carry their ideas by wordy warfare.

The Natives throughout the whole district are generally free from any infectious or contagious disease. Their principal ailments are colds, often ending in consumption, and a few cases, at intervals, of low fever. This generally results in death, more from the negligence they exercise towards the patient than from the disease itself. Should any epidemical disease reach them, they would certainly be decimated in a short time, from the cause mentioned above.

In concluding, I would beg to tender my thanks to Messrs. Kelly and Greenway, the officers at Mangonui and Russell, for their constant watchfulness and care in Native matters, and without whose co-operation, being so constantly at a distance, I should probably have experienced great difficulty in preserving peace and order in those portions of my Native district.

I have, &c.,

JAMES S. CLENDON,
Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 5.

Major MAIR, R.M., Native Agent, Auckland-Waikato District, to the UNDER-SECRETARY,
Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Auckland, 27th May, 1881.

I have the honor to report upon Native affairs in the Auckland and Waikato District.

Since my last annual report very few events of a startling nature have occurred, and Maori matters seem happily to have got into an easy groove.