

civilization. They have improved in their habits of thrift, though still too careless of the future, and are more careful than formerly of debt, and are more cleanly and tidy in their persons and dress. A great deal of this is undoubtedly due to examples set in the village schools in the various settlements, there being ten in this district.

With reference to the health of the people, chest troubles, as might be expected from the great amount of wet weather we have had this season, have been the principal cause of death during the year. At Waitapu, Whangape, and Herekino, several deaths have occurred from malarial or low fever, which also may in a great measure be traceable to the damp, warm season we have lately passed through; as well as to the sanitary condition of the several villages, which is very bad, they being as a rule established in low-lying rich valleys, with very little or no attention paid to drainage, or the disposal of the refuse matter from the houses. Medicines are provided for the Natives both at the schools and at the Township of Herd's Point, where a properly-qualified dispenser of drugs resides, who is subsidized by the Government, and they freely avail themselves of his services. In the case of Waitapu, on my receiving information in July last that fever was in the settlement and likely to spread, I caused the Native school there to be closed, and reported the circumstances to the Chairman of the County Council, who at once took steps to isolate the cases and procure proper attendance at the expense of the local body. And in March last, when I received notice from the Natives that the children attending the school at Whangape were suffering from an attack of influenza, accompanied by fever, I closed the school; and Mr. Bow, the teacher, who is well supplied with drugs, and is a gentleman of more than ordinary ability, at once gave the Natives every assistance in his power, though I am sorry to say that up to this date I have word that one of the school children has died, and others are still suffering from the effects of the epidemic. In my report of the 10th instant this matter is more fully dealt with. I am of opinion that the health of the Natives will not be materially improved, and that periodical attacks of malarial fever will reappear, until they can be taught (which will be most difficult in the case of the older people) the actual necessity and vital importance of a most decided change in their sanitary arrangements. Otherwise the health of the district has been moderately good.

The habits of the people may be said to be improving. Intemperance, so long the bane of the race, is fast losing its hold upon them, and it is now very seldom that a Native is to be seen in a state of intoxication. This is doubtless largely due to the improvement in this respect in the habits of the Europeans resident in the district, and also to the praiseworthy efforts of Mr. Kereama Tawhai and the resident missionary here, who have made a regular crusade through the North in the cause of the Blue-Ribbon movement and gained an immense number of converts, who up to the present have firmly adhered to their pledges; and I cannot speak too highly of the good that has ensued, and is likely to ensue, to the Native race therefrom.

During the past season a rather larger area of land has been cultivated and more food raised than during former years, and, as the people do not hold large meetings or *huis* as frequently as they did, there is not likely to be any scarcity during the coming winter. Many very large patches of tobacco have also been successfully harvested, and but a limited quantity of the imported article is used in the district. For the first time, grapes have assumed a commercial value in this district: this is owing to a party of German vinegrowers having commenced the manufacture of wine; and I am informed that one Native residing on the Mangamuka River disposed of a ton of grapes at 2d. per pound. No doubt in future seasons more attention will be paid to this industry. The gum fields still attract a large number of persons, and many Natives from the West Coast spend at least six months in every twelve in the Kaipara District following the occupation of gum-digging. A large proportion of the county works, road-making, &c., are contracted for by Natives, and carried out, as a rule, in a very creditable manner. The village schools, ten in number, are still well supported—in fact, since their establishment in this district, have been a most decided success.

No Native quarrels of consequence have occurred, nor has crime been on the increase during the past twelve months. A considerable amount of interest has been evinced by the Hokianga Natives in politics, and the elections for members under "The Native Committees Act, 1883," has caused some little excitement here, four of the members elected belonging to this district. In conclusion, I feel I may safely say that the general condition of the Natives in the Hokianga District is satisfactory, and that considerable improvements have been manifested amongst them of late.

I have, &c.,

SPENCER VON STÜRMER,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

Resident Magistrate.

No. 4.

J. S. CLENDON, Esq., R.M., Whangarei, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Whangarei, 5th May, 1884.

I have the honour, in accordance with the instructions contained in your Circular No. 3, of the 9th April last, to report, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, as follows:—

The Natives in the Kaipara District have employed themselves during the past year in gum-digging, cultivating their land, and some few in felling and squaring kauri timber for ship-