

wheat, oats, &c., and getting in their potatoes. But a large number of them are temporarily migrating to the Hauraki District for the purpose of digging kauri gum, which is found to be a very profitable employment during the time the price rules high for that article. Those who go for that purpose generally remain away from two to five months; and upon their return, if they have been fortunate, they, Native-like, make so much of it by exaggeration that those who previously remained behind are induced to go and try their luck also, which they do with varying success. The localities which the Natives from this district generally prefer for their gum-digging expeditions are in the ranges at the back of Hikutaia and Shortland within the Thames District.

*The Tekau-ma-rua, or Disciples of Te Whiti.*

In my last year's report I had to refer to the fanatical action of a section of Natives who had then lately been turned out of Parihaka, and who, under their leader Te Mahuki, thought to establish a repetition of the West Coast difficulty at their settlement here, known as Te Kumi. In that, however, they were unsuccessful, as in return for their opening proceedings (which consisted of tying up and ill-treating Mr. Hursthouse and his companions) they were promptly arrested and punished by imprisonment, which so disorganized them, and, to use a nautical expression, "took the wind out of their sails," that since their liberation they have conducted their proceedings on a much milder and less lawless basis. They (or, rather, some of them) now content themselves with making periodical attempts to return to Parihaka; but as they are not allowed to go beyond the White Cliffs, they—after inoffensively presenting themselves there, and not being allowed to proceed further—quietly return home, only to repeat the performance after they have had a short rest. They, however, commence to show signs of weakening in this idiotic policy: in fact, the odds just now are so much against them that it is quite natural they should begin to get tired. When I state that it takes them four or five days to reach the White Cliffs from where they live, and that it only takes the force stationed at that place a few minutes to turn them back, it will easily be seen that they are too heavily handicapped to succeed in their undertaking. There are, however, several signs noticeable which indicate that a change is taking place amongst them, and that for the better. They no longer impose the implicit faith they formerly did in their quondam leader, Te Mahuki. Their ignominious arrest when led by him into Alexandra last year, when they firmly believed that the result would be of an entirely different character, has shaken their faith in him; and their subsequent incarceration in prison has more than taken the edge off the fervour they previously exhibited in the cause they advocated. I am of opinion that, unless some relaxation takes place in the order that at present prevents them from returning to Parihaka, the whole thing will soon die out, and they will again revert to their former peaceful and industrious style of living. They have already shown a kindly feeling to the railway surveyors who have had to carry the line through, and to reside for a short time at their settlements; and that they do not view the railway itself with any suspicion, or have any animosity against it, is shown by the fact that some of them have already written asking, not that the line be stopped altogether, but merely that its direction should be altered in certain places in order to avoid destroying timber bushes, &c., which they wish to preserve, they at the same time offering to point out an equally suitable place for the line to go. All this, I think, speaks in their favour, and goes to show that they will soon be on good terms again with every one about them.

*Occupation of Government Land by ex-Rebels under the Waikato Confiscated Land Acts.*

I am not able to report that much has been done in this matter during the past year. The same causes that previously militated against it still exists, namely, the ex-rebels or King Natives will not personally accept or occupy any lands from the Government until something is finally settled regarding Tawhiao and them as a power and a people that require dealing with as a whole and not individually. There are one or two exceptions, but they are merely isolated cases: one is that of a Native named Te Matenga, who accepted land at Te Rore, about three miles from here, and which he, and his wife, their son, and a relative have occupied and industriously worked ever since; the other is the case of a man named Ngahautaua, who was one of nineteen others to whom a block of eighteen acres was offered, situated within a mile of Alexandra Township, about eighteen months ago. Up to the present time none but himself have occupied it, and he only commenced to do so a short time ago. In order that he might not be under the impression that he could claim the whole block on behalf of those who refuse to occupy, I went to see him the other day, and made him understand that only a small area sufficient to represent his own occupation and that of his wife would be awarded to him.

There are, however, other Natives, who are occupying Government land under the above-mentioned Acts, who are now altogether outside the ex-rebels under Tawhiao. I refer to Te Whatarangi and people at Mangatangi, and Te Kooti and people who will shortly be in occupation of a portion of a block of land near Orakau that is about to be purchased by the Government. There are also others who are already settled down, some on the banks of the Waikare Lake and Matahuru Stream, and others at places known as Te Ruato and Pokaiwhenua. These were all referred to in my last year's report.

*Te Kooti.*

Having referred to Te Kooti, I may here state that, with the exception of an occasional bout of drunkenness, he has done nothing during the last year to cause one to say that he has