

They really want to be let alone, and to manage their own affairs without any assistance from us, and it is only quite recently that they have given up all hope of obtaining some concession of that sort from the New Zealand Government.

During the past few years, in which these people have been approachable by meetings and discussions with Ministers and representatives of the Government, it has, I think, always appeared to them that we were most anxious to make terms with them, and that eventually an arrangement somewhat similar to the one they desired would be arrived at, and that, in return for their allowing us to put roads and railroads through their territory, we would grant them an independent authority. The events that have happened during the last three years, and the change in the Government policy during that period, have opened their eyes to the fact that such a result is not at all likely to take place. Not only has the position taken up by the Government helped to bring about this result, but so also has the recent secession of the powerful Ngatimaniapoto, and the consequent loss of the large territory that would have come under Tawhiao's rule had he been previously successful in setting up a monarchy for the Maori people. Such being the case, the King party had either to make some great effort, or else to give up altogether, and accept the new position by acknowledging our sovereignty and coming in under our laws.

But this latter step they evidently do not intend to take until they have exhausted all other means; so, ignoring the fact of there being in New Zealand a representative of Her Majesty in the person of His Excellency the Governor, as well as a Parliament which has the power to make laws for all who inhabit these islands, they have determined to send some of their representatives—including Tawhiao himself—to England, to lay their case (so they fondly hope) at the feet of the Queen; and they hope by so doing to get what they desire. They have no idea of the connection of our Parliament with our Governor, and of our Governor with our Queen. Their idea is that they have only to make out a case, and that the Queen or the Parliament of England will not only give them what they ask for, but also take the New Zealand Government and the New Zealand Governor to task for not giving it to them before.

There are two things that the King Natives have a great desire should be taken in hand and dealt with by the people in England; one of these is the granting of their desire to set up a king for themselves; and the other, to have an investigation into the cause of the Waikato war, the Natives holding that they were forced into it, and that, therefore, the confiscation of Waikato was illegal, and should not have taken place. With regard to the latter I have nothing to say, but with regard to the former I think I am in a position to state that Tawhiao, in going Home to England as the so-called Maori King, does not represent more than one thousand out of a population of about forty thousand Natives in New Zealand. Those tribes inhabiting the country to the north of Auckland, from the Waitemata Harbour to the North Cape—namely, the Rarawa, the powerful Ngapuhi, and the Ngatiwhatua tribes—would scout the idea of Tawhiao or any one else but their own chiefs, being made king over them; so also would the warlike Ngatiporou of the East Coast, who themselves more than outnumber the people who support Tawhiao, taken from whatever source they can be got; so also would the Arawa tribes who inhabit the Lake District; the Thames or Hauraki Natives have the same feeling; and last, but not least, the Ngatimaniapoto, who until lately were the main supporters of the King movement, will now have nothing to do with it. Such being the case, Tawhiao and his remaining followers are in a helpless minority. When it is considered that, even admitting it were possible to give him and his few followers the power they demand, any attempt to do so would be opposed by all the tribes above mentioned, and that a multitude of troubles would thereby arise between us and them, I think it is better for us to refuse to give the King party what they want, and to put up with their opposition and reproaches, rather than to set up as a monarch of the Maori race in this part of the North Island a man who is not in any way acknowledged, or fit to be acknowledged, as such by nine-tenths of the Native population thereof. I have for some time been aware that there are really very few Natives who, if put to the test, would set up Tawhiao as a king or chief over them, possibly not five hundred who might be called genuine supporters of his; the others are made up of a few out of each of the different tribes, who only support him as a "fad" or fancy of theirs; to be forced to accept him as a reality would be very objectionable to them.

HAURAKI OR THAMES DISTRICT.

There is very little to report in connection with this district during the past year. Nothing of any importance has happened, and the Natives have continued to go on in the even tenor of their way. The death of only one person of importance has occurred, and no event of an exciting nature has taken place. The Natives have been fairly industrious and have had proportionately good crops—that is, those of them who have gone in for cultivating food. A great many of them, however, rely more upon the results of their kauri-gum-digging, and what revenue they can obtain from European sources, than upon what they get out of the ground, for a subsistence.

Taking the district all through, the Natives have been very temperate during last year, and a good number of them have joined the Blue Ribbon Army. There has also been a noticeable absence of crime, the records of the Thames Resident Magistrate's Court showing only five cases during the year, and at Te Aroha there have been three cases only, none of which were for worse crimes than drunkenness. This, over a period of twelve months, is, I think, very satisfactory.