

who have not adopted that faith are uneasy at its spread, and are in doubt as to what will come out of it in the future. Many surmises are indulged in. The Kooti-ites are, however, most reticent. There is no doubt that Kooti exercises great influence over his adherents, as it is currently stated here that the wages earned by the Natives in this district are all handed over to certain chiefs to form a fund for Te Kooti. It must be admitted that, if any man has such a hold as this on a large section of the Natives, his power over them must be great indeed. The Natives must be thoroughly imbued with his omnipotence to go as far as this. Hira te Popo's people were great sufferers through Kooti's last visit, which swamped the whole of their last year's maize-crop, and left them in debt besides. They are not satisfied with that, but are and have been making preparations ever since his last visit to entertain him again. He is to make another visit here this winter. It is a pity something cannot be done to prevent these large Native gatherings, which simply mean the leaving of the Native hosts to starve for the rest of the year. The Te Kooti-ite monthly meetings have been held as heretofore, much to the detriment of the Natives.

Crops.—The crops this year throughout the district are unusually good. Much larger areas have been grown this year than last, especially at Torere, Maraenui, Omaio, Te Kaha, and Raukokore.

Public Works.—The Ngaitai have been engaged widening the road between Opope and Torere, and the Whanau a Apanui in making the road over the cliff from Hanai to Maraenui.

Native Schools.—The nine schools in this district have been in full working-order during the past year, the attendance at most of them has considerably increased since the Christmas holidays, since which time the parents have carried out a promise made that they would send all the available children to the schools. In three schools this has taken place. I, however, could not help noticing, when looking up the children at the different settlements, when down the coast at Christmas time, that there were only a very few children—few or no babies.

Maketu.—I have visited Maketu periodically as heretofore, and held the Courts there. For some months a Native Land Court has been sitting at Maketu; consequently a great number of Natives have been assembled there. Notwithstanding this influx of population, the conduct of the Natives has been fairly good, judging from the cases brought before me in the Police Court. No offences of a serious nature have taken place. The Natives here appear to have cropped more extensively this season than they are in the habit of doing. This, no doubt, is attributable to the fact of finding themselves so hard-pushed for food last year. A new Roman Catholic Church has been erected here; but a great number of the Natives, especially the Ngatipikiao, under Te Pokiha, have a religion of their own, with Himiona te Orinui as prophet. This religion is somewhat similar to Te Kooti's. There must be three or four different sects at Maketu, judging from the number of church-bells that ring morning and evening.

Tauranga.—Having only just relieved Mr. Brabant of his duties in this part of the Bay of Plenty, I am not in a position to report very fully on the state of the Natives, or to remark on any special improvements that may have taken place, but hope next year to be able to furnish a full report on the state of the Natives in this part of my district. This must also apply to the Rotorua portion, which I have not yet had an opportunity of visiting. While in Tauranga last month, hearing the Papamoa personation cases, I saw a good many of the Natives who reside in the vicinity of Tauranga. These appeared to be healthy and well clothed. I also understand their crops are very fair, and that they have cultivated more wheat this year than usual. This, no doubt, is attributable to the fact of the repairs to the Wairoa mill, which I believe Hori Ngatai intends working this winter. The so-called Maori King, Tawhiao, has paid the Tauranga Natives a visit; but it would appear that his mana as King of the Maoris is simply nominal, and no importance need be attached to his late visit. It was simply one of Maori custom, which are made by different sections of Natives periodically, generally to cry over persons deceased since the previous meeting of the two tribes. I am not aware that any political signification is attached to it; I am of opinion that there is none. The fact of the Waikato Kingites leaving the Ngatimaniapoto territory is quite sufficient to destroy the little King authority which remained to Tawhiao. Many Natives from Tauranga district are away at Mercury Bay kauri-gum digging, the exodus from this Bay for this purpose being pretty extensive. Hori Ngatai and some forty others accompanied Mr. Taipua, M.H.R., to the West Coast upon his leaving Tauranga the other day. I believe their object was to be present at a large meeting to be held at Wanganui.

I have, &c.,

R. S. BUSH,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

Resident Magistrate.

No. 6.

Captain PREECE, R.M., Napier, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Napier, 18th May, 1888.

In accordance with the instructions contained in your circular No. 12, of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to forward the following report of the state of the Natives in this district:—

Napier District.

Notwithstanding the very dry weather the Native crops of wheat and oats have yielded large returns, particularly at the settlements of Waichiki, Omaha, and Waipatu. A great number of Natives were engaged shearing during the season, and several of them have taken large contracts from the runholders for bush-clearing. They seem to have taken more to work this season than they generally do: this I attribute to the fact that there has been a dearth in the land-selling market.