

to state, from the result of my own observation, that the very opposite is the case. As a people, they are squalid, miserable, and ignorant.

It has, I think, been found in every country where a civilised people has been brought in close contact with an uncivilised that the latter have always shown a greater predilection for adopting the evil practices of the dissolute and abandoned rather than follow the example of the moral and good. These people are no exception to this rule. But when it is remembered that their earliest association was with the class of Europeans who enjoy an unenviable reputation for recklessness and debauchery the surprise is that they are not much worse. Formerly the Wesleyan, and latterly the German, missionaries have done much to check these evil influences, and have in many ways benefited these people. But drunkenness is still of frequent occurrence, and to this, perhaps, amongst other causes, may be attributed the great mortality which has taken place within the last thirteen years. It is a melancholy fact that the aboriginal race is fast disappearing from these provinces.

No schools exist in these provinces; the Wesleyan and Maori Missionary Society of Otago have suspended operations, and the German Missionary Society is, from lack of means, relaxing its efforts; and now a strong appeal is made to the Government to step in and succour this small remnant of a once numerous and powerful tribe. Some of their chiefs are fully alive to their wretched condition. They scruple not to lay the whole blame on the Government. I refer to the alleged promises made by the Government through their agents at the cession of the lands in these provinces, to which I shall do myself the honour particularly to draw your attention in another letter.

The question may suggest itself, if these chiefs are sincere in their regrets at their present low state, how is it that they have not exerted themselves to raise their people from their degraded condition? They answer that they have placed full reliance upon the Government giving full effect to its engagements; that the Government promised to undertake the task of ameliorating their condition as part of the consideration for their lands; that, after waiting in vain for these benefits, they concluded in their own minds that Government had forgotten them. They then wrote to the Governor asking him to send a pakeha to watch over their interests and to advise them; no pakeha ever was sent. They have asked for schools for their children; none have ever been established. Despairing of any assistance from the Government they have, at the instance of the Rev. R. F. Reimenschneider, a German missionary, built a church, and are erecting a school-house at their own expense. The Government have assisted in building schoolhouses at Moeraki and Waikouaiti, and have very lately paid two-thirds of the price for the erection of a church and schoolhouse at Riverton, but, further than this, I am not aware that anything has been done.

A number of gentlemen in Dunedin, sensible of the neglected state of the Natives, and anxious to improve their condition, formed themselves into a society for that purpose; but their benevolent intentions on behalf of the Natives have, from a combination of difficulties, been frustrated, and not the least of these difficulties was the want of pecuniary means. Their applications to the public have been either coldly met or wholly unreciprocated. The agents for this society have been told that the Natives hold large reserves, which are for the most part lying waste—the Natives occupying only small portions which, if let, would bring in ample means. Upon this ground assistance has been refused. The fact that the Natives cannot deal with their own reserves does not appear to have occurred to these objectors. The application of this society to the General Government has practically shared the same fate. The consequence is that the operations of the society have been suspended.

Another grievance is that the Natives are practically excluded from our Courts from the want of a person to lay their causes of complaint intelligibly before the Magistrate. Another cause of grievance (in my opinion, a very reasonable one) is the want of an officer whose duty it should be to advise and watch over Native interests.

It will, perhaps, be expected of me that, as I have been making myself acquainted with some of the principal evils under which these Katimanoë and Kaitahu Tribes are labouring, I should point out what, in my opinion, is the best mode of remedying, or, at least, mitigating, those evils. I should, first of all, remark that I would not for one moment advocate a system having a tendency to spoil the Natives, making them simple dependents on the bounty of the Government. All that I would ask of the Government is to fulfil their first arrangements, and carry them out in their full integrity. Put within the reach of the Natives the means of raising them from their present low condition, let their desire for knowledge be satisfied, and let them see that we are anxious to discharge our moral obligations, and give practical proof of the desire so often sounded in their ears—that of considering them as one people with ourselves. Firstly, I would suggest that an officer be appointed with as little delay as possible, whose individual duty it shall be to look after the interests of Natives residing in the Provinces of Otago and Southland, also to hold the appointment of Commissioner of Native Reserves. It is impossible for the present Assistant Native Secretaries, from the nature of their other duties, to give the Natives that attention they require. Secondly, I would suggest the appointment of properly-qualified persons, who have a good general knowledge of the language, to be permanently attached to the Resident Magistrates' Courts, to be officers of those Courts. Two interpreters would, I think, be sufficient—one for Dunedin and Port Chalmers, and the other for Invercargill and the Bluff. Thirdly, that medical men be appointed to attend upon the Native sick. The services of three medical men would be required—one for Moeraki, Waitaki, and Waikouaiti; one for Purakaunui, Otakou, and Taiari; and one for the different places in the Southland Province. Fourthly, that schools be established, and schoolmasters appointed at the following places: Moeraki, Waikouaiti, Otakou Heads, Ruapuke and Aparima. In these schools the English language should be taught, and to be open to half-castes and Maoris alike. Fifthly, with regard to the Native reserves, I would suggest that the Natives be induced to hand over all those portions which they do not require for their own use into the hands of the Commissioner of