

There is one matter in connection with it, however, that sometimes causes trouble, more especially within the Waikato district. It is the action of what are called "King committees" in the districts where some of his supporters live. These committees are generally self-appointed, one of their number acting as magistrate or judge, who professes to deal with all matters that may be brought before him in the same way as do our Resident Magistrates' Courts. The fact of one of the parties to a suit not acknowledging his power or jurisdiction, and not attending his court, makes no difference to him. He simply hears the one side that appears before him, and gives judgment accordingly; and if the losing side object, and take no notice of the judgment, Native constables are then sent to enforce it by seizing horses, cattle, or chattels, as the case may be, which the "judge" sells by auction to satisfy the judgment and pay the court-fees and expenses. This would be all very well if they confined their operations to themselves, that is, to those who are followers of Tawhiao; but when they summon Natives who do not acknowledge their right to do so, and because they do not attend court go and seize their property and sell it, trouble is likely to ensue. In several cases the sufferers have had recourse to the European Resident Magistrate's Court for redress, and the offenders have mostly been ordered to return any property they may have seized, which order is very seldom carried out, and it becomes difficult and expensive to proceed in the matter in our Court beyond that stage. The offenders know this, and it gives them courage to continue their action. It is a pity that offenders of this class could not be made to suffer in pocket or in person for acts of this sort, because such conduct is very annoying, and likely to lead to trouble.

#### NATIVE SCHOOLS.

All the Native schools in my districts, with the exception of the one at Te Kopua, are in a fairly flourishing condition. One reason this one does not succeed is because no provision has yet been made for bridging two creeks that have to be crossed by the children before they can get to the school; another reason is that the new school which has lately started at Otorohanga has taken some of the children who used to attend the Kopua school. Since my last report another Native school has been started in the King-country—viz., at Otorohanga. The attendance at present is only about forty children, but it is expected to increase.

#### RELIGION.

Almost the only religion professed by the Natives throughout the Waikato and King-country is that which is being promulgated by the Mormon elders and teachers who have now been living for several years amongst them. The objections raised against these people in America and elsewhere cannot apply to New Zealand, for, so far as I have been able to see, whatever was objectionable in their religion and practices there has not been introduced here. The result of their teachings amongst the Maoris has certainly been good. One reason why these people and their teachings have found favour with the Maoris is because of their evident sincerity, their humility, the cheerfulness with which they put up with hardship, and the readiness with which they adapt themselves to the Maori style of living. They also practice themselves what they teach to others, and they strictly carry out the Scripture injunction to carry neither purse nor scrip. They never make collections, or ask for money; neither do they seek to acquire land, nor mix themselves up in any matters that do not belong to their particular sphere. No wonder, then, that the Maoris become converts to their teachings. Maoris, as a rule, are very discerning, and also very good judges of character, and they evidently appreciate the disinterestedness of the Mormon teachers now working amongst them. Maoris never cared for, or understood much about, our distinctions between different creeds, sects, doctrines, and dogmas; and the importance with which some of us treat these matters, to the exclusion sometimes of the true elements of Christianity, makes the Maori wonder whether the religion that we have been trying for years to get him to adopt is really religion in its strictest sense, and whether, if to adopt it would cause them to act as we sometimes do, they would not be as well without it. The theology of the Maori does not represent the numerous phases that it does with us; but when they find any one putting up with personal loss and discomfort all for the purpose of doing them good, and that without expectation of any earthly fee or reward, they at first view him as a curiosity, after that, if he proves to be genuine, they believe in him, and become converts to his teachings. A considerable number of Natives in both the Thames and Te Aroha districts have now adopted the Mormon faith.

#### OBSTRUCTION TO SURVEYS.

The Piako Natives, within the Thames district, have lately caused some trouble by refusing to allow a surveyor to erect a trig. station at one of their settlements on the Piako River known as Te Kerepechi. I was about proceeding there to try and arrange the matter during a visit I made to the Thames a short time ago, but just before starting I received instructions not to go, as the Surveyor-General had decided to take the steps provided by law to punish any person who destroys survey-marks, or obstructs surveyors whilst carrying out their work when armed with the necessary authority.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE T. WILKINSON,

Government Native Agent and Land-purchase Officer.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

#### No. 5.

Mr. R. S. BUSH, R.M., Tauranga, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Tauranga, 5th June, 1890.

I have the honour, in furnishing the following report on the Natives in the district under my control, to state that it refers to and includes all the Natives from Tauranga to Cape Runaway, also those in the Thermal district of Rotorua and Taupo, and the Urewera Country. The Native population of these localities numbers between 8,000 and 9,000 persons.