

1873.

NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE RESERVES, MIDDLE ISLAND.

(REPORT BY MR. ALEX. MACKAY.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.

SIR,—

Native Reserves Office, Nelson, 30th July, 1873.

I have the honor to forward herewith, for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, a report of the condition of the Native Reserves, property under my charge in the South Island, from the 1st January, 1872, to the 30th June, 1873.

Provinces of Nelson and Marlborough.

The chief portions of the estate from which an income is derived are situated in the town of Nelson and the districts of Moutere and Motueka, and consist of fifty-two town sections, containing in the aggregate 50a. 2r. 36p., and 4,100a. Or. 15p. of suburban land in the last named district, less 1,294 acres in the occupation of the Natives. There are also forty quarter-acre sections in the town of Westport, a few of which are now beginning to yield a rental.

The gross rental derivable from the property at present is £1,500 per annum; out of which sum £330 is payable to the Natives for rent; the remainder, after defraying permanent charges, is spent in improving the general condition of the Natives by assisting them in their industrial pursuits, and in aiding them from time to time to erect a better class of houses. Medical attendance is also provided for them out of the fund, and rations and clothing supplied to the sick and indigent.

The income collected from the estate during the above-named period amounts to £1,698 9s. 5d., this, added to £600 on mortgage, and £447 3s. 1d., balance to the credit of the fund in Public Account on the 1st July, 1872, makes a total of £2,745 12s. 6d. The expenditure for the same period amounts to £2,511 2s. 3d., leaving a surplus to the credit of the fund of £234 10s. 3d.

The past year has been a very expensive one to the Trust, in consequence of the destitution of the Natives in several localities, caused by the destruction of their crops through the vicissitudes of the weather. The people of Motueka, about eighty in number, have been the chief sufferers in that way, the majority of whom have had to be maintained for over six months at the expense of the fund, in consequence of the destruction of their crops by floods during the previous winter, and the long continuous drought of the past summer causing a failure of their early crops.

An expenditure of £527 8s. 8d. has been incurred in providing Natives with provisions and clothing during the past year: out of which £352 19s. 6d. was expended for provisions for the Natives of Motueka; £108 12s. 0d. for rations and clothing for sick and indigent Natives, Natives visiting the town on business with the office, rations to sick Natives undergoing medical treatment, and clothing for aged and decrepid Natives, a large number of whom had to be supplied. A good deal of sickness also prevailed, especially amongst the children.

A sum of £28 18s. 5d. was expended for destitute Natives in the Takaka and Collingwood districts, and £10 7s. 0d. for medical comforts for the Motueka Natives.

The sum of £26 11s. 1d. has been expended in providing rations for the widow of Wakatau Kaikora, as authorised by the Hon. Native Minister by letter No. 160-2, 26th July, 1871, making a total as above.

The seed potatoes procured for the Natives of Motueka cost £100 12s. 10d., and £33 4s. was expended for building materials on their behalf.

£128 19s. 10d. has been expended in providing the Natives with ploughs and harrows, tools, and ironmongery, and paint for boat building purposes, and £40 4s. 6d. for harness.

The sum of £25 has been lent to Natives, and £170 2s. advanced to defray the cost of passages. These two sums are repayable to the Trust, being simply advances made to meet the exigencies of the Natives at the time.

The cost of supplying the inmates of the hostleries during the past year with fuel and potatoes amounted to £18 4s. 1d., and the sum of £18 has been paid for allowance to a blind Native. The recipient, an old pensioner on the Fund, has recently died, the contribution for this object will therefore cease.

The sum of £335 has been paid to the Natives for rent collected on their behalf by the Trust from surplus land in their possession in Motueka, unrequired for purposes of cultivation.