

1875.

NEW ZEALAND.

FURTHER REPORTS FROM OFFICERS IN NATIVE DISTRICTS.

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

No. 1.

Mr. E. W. PUCKEY to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Thames, 28th May, 1875.

In compliance with instructions contained in your circular of date as per margin, I have the honor to submit the following report on the state of Native matters in this district:—

The Condition of the Natives, Physical and Moral.—I may state that but few deaths have taken place; still, however, two very prominent chiefs have passed away. Haora Tipa, the principal chief of the Ngatipaoa, of whose loyalty to the Government, firm friendship to the Pakeha (whom he usually styled "toku iwi," *my people*), and the wisdom of whose counsels to his people, who always yielded the greatest deference to his wishes, are so well known that no words of mine are required to do more than pay a passing tribute to his memory; and Mohi Mangakahia, a most promising young man (son-in-law to W. H. Taipari, the well-known chief of Ngatimaru), and who, his friends hoped, would one day have represented the Western Maori Electoral District in the Parliament of the colony.

The loss of men of this stamp is irreparable to the Native race, where so few have gifts which qualify them to take their place, or the perseverance and industry without which it is impossible to achieve any great success.

Measles has lately been prevalent amongst the Natives as well as the Europeans resident in this district, and with singular fatality as respects the latter, while only a few Natives have succumbed to its effects.

There has been very little crime amongst the Thames Natives, four only during the time I have had charge of Native affairs here have been sentenced to imprisonment—two for petty larceny, one for horse-stealing, and one for aggravated assault. Drunkenness, I am happy to say, is not so rampant as it was, though no temperance movement has as yet been set on foot by the Good Templars, of the benefit accruing from whose actions some of the neighbouring districts seem to be sharing.

Hauhauism is gradually and steadily declining, and all the professedly Hauhau Natives of this district have entirely broken through that rigid exclusiveness which so long kept them aloof from free intercourse with their Pakeha neighbours.

With respect to the cultivation of the soil and the growth of crops little can be said; for the last year or so the means of obtaining food and supplies of various kinds has been so easy of access to all the Natives of the Hauraki tribes, by pledging their lands for sale to the Government, that but little attention has been paid to agricultural pursuits generally.

The falling off of the Native revenue, in the shape of miners' rights fees, during the last twelve months (to the extent of about 40 per cent.), has caused a good deal of discontent amongst the owners of the gold field. I have made it my special care to warn them from time to time of the gradual decline of their income. They do not seem, however, either to realize or are unwilling to believe the actual facts of the case, or the causes which have led thereto.

In conclusion, I beg leave to say that if the feeling of the Hauraki Natives towards the Government of the colony were fully shared in by the Natives of other districts, no great time would elapse in solving the great question of the Native difficulty.

I have, &c.,

E. W. PUCKEY,
Native Agent.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 2.

Mr. R. S. BUSH to the HON. the NATIVE MINISTER.

Resident Magistrate's Office, Raglan, 6th July, 1875.

SIR,—

I have the honor to furnish, for your information, the following report on Native matters generally:—

Many of the young men of the Tainui and Ngatimahanga tribes are at Hone te One's new settlement Torea, at Kawhia, clearing land for extensive cultivations. As soon as the ground is ready for the seed, many others will go there to assist in sowing.

These people at present have no intention of making this settlement their permanent residence; they will cultivate and reside as formerly at their old kaingas about the Whaingaroa Harbour and inland.

At Tawhaio's request, Hone te One, upon resuming occupation of his Kawhia lands, told the Patupo (a section of Ngatimahuta generally looked down upon) to remove their cattle, &c., from Kawhia to their own land situated on this side of Aotea Harbour. The Patupo are reported as not approving of this order, and the Kawhia-Ngatimahuta are said to have written to Hone te One, requesting him not to insist upon this removal.

Tawhaio is busy at his new settlement Hikurangi, situate on some part of Pirongia, about midway between Kawhia and Alexandra. He has been expected at Kawhia for some days, where probably he has arrived ere this.

The Natives this year are obtaining a better price for their grain, viz. six shillings a bushel; heretofore the price has seldom exceeded four and sixpence to five shillings. They have also raised the price of firewood, owing in a measure to the Native Store Company purchasing all they can procure for export to Onehunga by their cutter.

I am much afraid that the Native Company will scarcely survive another year. What with their losses on their vessel in consequence of mismanagement, and their late law expenses, they are rather at their wits' end to carry on the concern. They had a splendid opportunity of making money, but the want of business experience and energy is ruining them fast; no such thing as a dividend has been paid to any shareholder, nor does there appear any probability of any such occurrence taking place. The directors, however, are changing their manager and servants; it is to be hoped this alteration will prove beneficial, and tide them over their present embarrassment.

Several of the local chiefs are at Karakariki, for which place they left yesterday. The object of their visit is to attend a meeting called by Major Te Wheoro, for the purpose of discussing the present drunken habits of their race, and to form some plan by which the existing evil may be suppressed.

Manuhiri is reported as writing Te Wheoro, urging him to prevent spirits being supplied to Hauhaus when visiting our settlements.

The drunkenness hitherto so prevalent at Kuiti is said to have decreased wonderfully.

The late epidemic (measles) appears to have abated. It has left this district without having caused any deaths, although some three or four are said to have died from the after effects.

Generally the Natives resident here, and also those visiting from a distance, appear more friendly disposed, and the former reserve so perceptible, especially amongst the chiefs of the so-called King party, is gradually disappearing.

I have, &c.,

R. S. BUSH,

Government Interpreter.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

No. 3.

Mr. S. DEIGHTON, R.M., to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Waitangi, Chatham Island, 17th July, 1875.

I have the honor to forward the enclosed annual Native report for the district of Chatham Islands.

At the last census, taken in 1874, the population on the island consisted of—Maoris, 23 males, 29 females; Morioris, 38 males, 25 females; since which time I have had arrivals from New Zealand, 13 males and 11 females, making a total of Maoris and Morioris, 139—a very small remnant of the population once residing here. I am given, however, to understand that we shall have some more from New Zealand, consisting principally of young people who were born on the island.

I am glad to report that the Natives here are in a fairly prosperous condition, most of them owning small flocks of sheep, besides horses and cattle. Some of them own as many as 1,000 to 1,500 sheep; and as they are at very little expense as regards shepherding, &c., they manage to live very comfortably on the proceeds.

A few own wooden houses, and the remainder are procuring timber for that purpose. Food also is plentiful, there being an endless supply of sea fish, besides fresh-water eels and game.

The climate is very healthy, and, although rather wet during the winter months, not so cold as in many parts of New Zealand.

In spare times the Natives have been very profitably engaged in gathering fungus, which now realizes a very good price. About ninety bales were exported to New Zealand last year, at an average of from £4 to £5 per bale; and, as the price is now very much higher than at that time, I estimated the spring crop will realize nearly £1,000.

I am sorry to say that for some years past there has been no minister of any denomination on the island; but as the Europeans have opened negotiations for the purpose of procuring the services of a clergyman of the Church of England, I hope the Natives will be benefited by the same. There is still a large Native church standing at Waitangi, which might be repaired to be made available, but at present it is in a very dilapidated condition.

I have much pleasure in adverting to the very amicable feeling that exists between the settlers and the Natives. For a long time after my arrival there was an unpleasant feeling existing, owing to the absurd affair that took place in Mr. La Nauze's time, but it is never alluded to now, except in a joking manner. The only disagreement of importance that has occurred since I have been here, among the Natives, was one about six months ago, relative to the right of running some sheep belonging to Apitia

on the Mangape block. As things were looking rather serious, I called a meeting of all parties concerned, to discuss the affair amicably. The meeting was rather stormy, and the contending parties very stubborn, as is usually the case where land is the question. I managed, however, after two days' talk, to arrange the affair to the satisfaction of all parties, since which I have heard no more of it.

I wish I could speak in the same terms of the Morioris; but I cannot. They certainly are the most quarrelsome set of people among themselves I ever saw, and appear never to be happy except when bickering together. Their disputes, however, are very harmless, rarely going beyond personal abuse of one another. They are a very inferior race in every respect to the Maoris. The fact of their having been kept in subjection for so many years may have possibly made them more so than they would otherwise have been. The race is fast dying out, there being very few women left, and the children rarely reach years of maturity.

Among the few crosses between the Maoris and Morioris, I notice some fine-looking people; but the Morioris themselves, although to all appearance strong and healthy, are not so in reality, and soon give way under sickness of any kind. Among the few survivors, I observe a large proportion of the cripples or malformations.

As I am on the subject of Morioris, I may mention that I find great difficulty in acquiring their language, as it is never spoken even by the oldest inhabitant, and not even known by the middle-aged and younger portion. I have succeeded in getting a large portion of a vocabulary partly completed, but it requires numerous alterations before I should consider it to be satisfactory.

I am now getting some of the old traditions translated into Maori and English, which I think will be interesting. I have received a good deal of assistance from Mr. A. Shand, who is working in a similar way. The greatest difficulty I find is the pronunciation, which is very peculiar. The words in writing would be similar to those in the Maori language, but the pronunciation is indescribable. I think some light may be thrown upon their first arrival in this country in some of the old legends, and for that reason I am anxious to get all the information I can relative to them.

The few surviving Morioris are very well off, having good reserves of land in various parts of the island. They also have somewhat about 3,000 sheep among them, besides horses and a few head of cattle, and, notwithstanding their quarrelsome propensities, are tolerably industrious.

Referring to the quantity of fish on the coast, I have had several conversations with the Natives, and have endeavoured to induce them to commence a fishing establishment on a small scale, as I am quite convinced that, could such a thing be started, it would prove very remunerative, on account of the plentiful supply always to be obtained, and also on account of the superior quality of the same.

The Natives have, at my suggestion, joined with the Europeans, at and near Waitangi, in procuring a large seine net by way of trial, which, if it succeed, may eventually prove the means of establishing a proper fishery on a large scale.

I have, &c.,
S. DEIGHTON,
Resident Magistrate.

The Under Secretary, Native Office, Wellington.

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