

## No. 7.

H. W. BRABANT, Esq., R.M., Tauranga, to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Native Office, Tauranga, 30th May, 1882.

I have the honor to submit the following remarks as my annual report on native affairs in the districts under my charge.

*Tauranga District.*

There is no change to report in the physical condition of the natives during the past year, no chief of any note has died, and the deaths have been below the average. The medical officer has attended on the natives as usual, and his reports of cases have been duly sent to your office. He has made an effort to vaccinate the natives, but it has been difficult to get them together for the purpose. They will as a rule submit to the operation if the vaccinator goes to their settlement, but will not take the trouble to assemble in one place for the purpose. The medical officer complains that the Government travelling allowance is insufficient to cover the cost of visiting them. For this reason the vaccination has not been general.

I regret to report that the natives in this district do not cultivate so much as formerly. This I attribute to the ease with which they can now obtain advances from speculators on their lands. Although the Tauranga lands are all inalienable, except by leave of the Governor, a native who can show any evidence of title can, it appears, always obtain advances, the purchaser trusting to time or a turn in the political wheel to enable him to perfect his title.

There is no doubt the natives have more land in this district than they will ever utilise, and it is to be regretted that they are unable to part with it without themselves deteriorating in their habits and behaviour.

As Commissioner of Tauranga lands, I have sat 183 days, and dealt in various ways with over 66,000 acres of land, but as I have made a special report to you on this subject it is unnecessary for me to enlarge upon it here. I consider it proper to proceed with the investigation of the titles, and to complete them with as little delay as possible, as it appears the sittings of the Court have, while they last, the effect of withdrawing the natives from industrial pursuits, and of causing drunkenness which has been very prevalent amongst them while assembled in the town, the Court having more than once to adjourn from this cause. The provision of the new Licensing Act against supplying liquor to natives is inoperative in Tauranga, owing to its having been formed into a borough.

During the past year the natives have done some work by contract for the County Council on the Tauranga and Maketu road, and the Tauranga and Waikato road. A few of them have also been employed from time to time on the Rotorua road.

In the Police Court at Tauranga one native was committed for trial and eight were summarily convicted, one of which convictions was for larceny, the rest for assault and minor offences. In the Resident Magistrate's Court nineteen cases were heard in which Europeans sued natives, four in which natives sued Europeans, and one only in which both plaintiff and defendant were natives.

In this district they continue to settle their disputes amongst themselves, generally by the arbitration of native assessors, the fees deterring them from coming to Court.

A native school has been established at Maungatapu, which has an average attendance of thirty-three. It is at present held in a church, but a site has been given by the natives and tenders called for the building.

*Maketu and Rotorua District.*

I have visited Rotorua frequently during the year, and Maketu two or three times. The mortality amongst the Arawa has been below the average, no chief of note having died, and until lately, when measles have been prevalent, there has been but little sickness. The natives at Ohinemutu have now the advantage of medical advice from Dr. Lewis, the officer under "The Thermal Springs Act." He will also carry on the vaccination in this district which had been commenced by Dr. Armitage.

A supply of simple medicines has been kept at all the isolated native schools, which arrangement is a great boon to the natives.

As in the Tauranga District, I fear the natives cultivate less than formerly, owing to the large sums of money which they obtain by the sale of land, and from rents, and the expenditure of tourists. The large rental for which the Town of Rotorua, under "The Thermal Springs Act," was lately leased, leads the natives to hope that they will before long be able to live without work, their rents supporting them.

During the last two years a complete change has come over the feelings of the Arawa in relation to their lands; formerly they would allow no Land Court to sit within their district, and were continually occupying themselves with schemes for settling the titles themselves. Now, however, they wish to put all their lands through, and it appears likely that the sitting of the Court, which is now proceeding at Ohinemutu, may be continued for many months.

In the Ohinemutu Police Court there have been thirteen convictions of natives, one for larceny, and the rest for drunkenness, and minor offences. In the Civil Court twenty cases were heard between natives, and six in which one party was a European and one a native. At Maketu there were three convictions of natives for minor offences, and five civil cases were heard between natives, and seven in which one party was a European and one a native. Although the police are endeavouring to enforce the provisions of the new Licensing Act, drunkenness is, I fear, on the increase in this district.

There are now seven native schools, in operation in this district, having a gross attendance of 365, and an average of 220. A site has recently been given at Te Awahou, Rotorua, where it is proposed to erect a new school, instead of the present dilapidated one.