

*Opotiki District.*

Owing to the duties of Tauranga Land Commissioner having kept me fully occupied, I have only been able to visit this district once during the past year; although there are various questions affecting reserves which require attention.

I advanced the settlement of the Whakatohea Reserves a stage, and shall shortly have the titles to them finally settled. The natives in this district continue industrious and law-abiding. The fever for land sales has however set in, and must, I fear, have the same effect as in other districts.

There are now six schools for natives in operation in this district, having a gross attendance of 223, and an average of 166.

In conclusion, may I be permitted to make a few remarks on what is at present much discussed by the natives—the operation of the Licensing Act of last session.

Before that Act was passed, the sale of intoxicants to natives was prohibited in towns, but allowed in native districts. Now, exactly the reverse obtains; and it is not astonishing that the sudden change has greatly puzzled the native mind. Without entering into the debated question whether it is possible to prevent natives obtaining liquors, now they have acquired by habit a taste for them, I may say that I think a majority of the natives are in favor of the restriction on the sale; but they are unable to understand why it should be confined to native districts, and, if I may presume to do so, I would express my opinion that, if any distinction were made, there is more reason for the sale being prohibited in towns, because there natives drinking cause annoyance to the European population, as well as doing injury to themselves.

I have, &c.,

HERBERT W. BRABANT, R.M.,

Native Officer, Bay of Plenty.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

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No. 8.

Captain PREECE, R.M., Napier, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

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Napier, 26th June, 1882.

In compliance with the instructions contained in your circular of the 12th of April, No. 4, I have the honor to forward for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister, this, my annual report on the state of the natives in the districts under my charge:—

NAPIER DISTRICT.

There is very little to report on in this district: the natives have been very quiet during the past year. A few tribal disturbances, in connection with land disputes, have occurred; but they have always been settled amongst themselves, or allowed to stand over for settlement by the Native Lands Court. The death of the Wairarapa prophet, Paora Potangaroa, has been the means of almost putting an end to the fanaticism amongst the natives in the southern end of the district, mentioned in my last report.

*Industrial Pursuits.*—A great number of natives (men and women), have been engaged during the season, shearing and sorting wool; indeed many of the runholders employ them in preference to Europeans. A great quantity of wheat has been grown at the several settlements on the Heretaunga Flat; also at Waiohiki, and Omaha.

*Native Schools.*—The Pakowhai School has been re-opened, but the attendance has been small. The natives appear to take little interest in the education of their children.

WAIROA.

The natives in this district maintain their character for good behaviour. They have cultivated large quantities of maize at Wairoa and Nuhaka. At Te Mahia they have just had a very successful whaling season, some of them realizing large sums for oil.

The Opoho land dispute has been settled by a large portion of the block being passed through the Native Lands Court. Judgment has been given practically in favor of the Whakaki natives; but a rehearing has been granted, and the final decision will be given next month.

A section of Upper Wairoa natives still keep up communication with Te Kooti. Some of these people lately obstructed the survey of the Wairoa and Gisborne Road. Informations were laid by Mr. Baker, chief surveyor, against the ringleaders, who were fined.

The following cases, in which Maoris were defendants, were heard in the Resident Magistrate's Court:—Assault, 1; cattle-stealing, committed for trial, 1; larceny, dismissed, 1; breach of Dog Registration Act, convicted, 5—dismissed, 1; perjury, dismissed, 1. Civil Cases: Europeans against Natives, 24; Natives against Europeans, 8; Maoris only, 17. Considering the large native population in the district, the number of cases is very small.

The number of deaths has been above the average, particularly about Te Whakaki. There has, however, been no epidemic amongst them. Vaccination has not been carried out, owing to the doctor being unable to get a supply of good lymph.

POVERTY BAY AND WAIAPU DISTRICTS.

At Poverty Bay the Native Lands Court has been sitting almost continuously since January last, and a great number of original claims and subdivisions have been settled. The latter have been made by consent of all parties concerned, including lessees.

At Waiapu a long-standing quarrel between two tribes had assumed a serious aspect. Wiremu Keiha and his tribe were afraid to remain at their homes, as the opposing tribe, under Hirini Kahe, were going about the valley armed, and had individually threatened the lives of Wiremu Keiha and two of his men. On my arrival at Waiapu in the month of October, informations were laid against the parties for sureties of the peace. They failed to appear in answer to the summonses, and warrants were issued for their apprehension. These, however, were not to be executed until the next sitting of