

1892.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS IN NATIVE DISTRICTS.

[In continuation of G.-5, 1891.]

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

No. 1.

The ACTING UNDER-SECRETARY to the OFFICERS of NATIVE DISTRICTS.

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 26th May, 1892.

I have the honour, by direction of the Hon. Mr. Cadman, to request you will be good enough to furnish, with as little delay as possible, the usual annual report on the state of the Natives in your district, for presentation to Parliament.

I have, &c.,
W. J. MORPETH,
Acting Under-Secretary.

No. 2.

Mr. H. W. BISHOP, R.M., to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Auckland, 24th June, 1892.

In compliance with the request conveyed in your Circular No. 7, of the 26th May last, I have the honour to report as follows on the state of the Natives in my district :—

During the past year the health of the Maoris has been most remarkably good as compared with previous years. The only epidemic that came to my knowledge occurred at Te Rawhiti, in the neighbourhood of Russell. There, a number of Natives were seized with a kind of low fever, with symptoms of an aggravated nature. All of those attacked were, very wisely, immediately removed by their friends to Russell, where they could procure remedies and proper attention, and to this movement is probably attributable the fact that of those attacked by the epidemic only two died.

I cannot say that this immunity from sickness generally is in any way due to improvement in the mode of living of the Natives. If there is any change for the better it is quite imperceptible. In an isolated case here and there a Native may build for himself and family a better class of residence, and may strive to conform more closely to the ordinary laws of health, but, as a rule, the bulk of the people cling to the old style. This means the establishing of settlements in low-lying swampy localities; the crowding of men, women, and children at night into low whares, in an atmosphere that is simply appalling; the constant change, under these conditions, from extreme heat to damp cold; utter carelessness in the matter of dress, being one day muffled up to the throat in numerous wraps, and on the next almost naked. These are a few of the causes of fatal pulmonary complaints, so extremely prevalent amongst the Maoris. Warning is thrown away. They admit the evil, but disregard the consequences.

A Native of considerable note has lately died, in the person of Paora Tuhaere. He resided at Orakei, near Auckland, and was a well-known figure in the streets of the city. He exercised considerable influence over the Natives in this district, and was much respected.

A very large meeting was lately held at Waitangi, in the Bay of Islands, on the site of the first signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. These meetings have become annual affairs. They involve a great deal of talk, and a vast consumption of food. They foster and encourage a spirit of unrest amongst the Maoris, and result invariably in nothing practical being done. This last meeting was no exception to the rule. The same subjects come up year after year for discussion, and chief among these is the matter of the enforcement of the Dog Registration Act. This is always a burning question, and seems to put quite in the shade what might reasonably be considered more important matter.

One very important subject for congratulation in connection with the social state of the Natives is their ever-increasing sobriety. This becomes more noticeable every year, and drunkenness is now considered a perfect disgrace. There are, however, a few places in the North where the resident