

is not done, every piece of land which is fenced in, and reclaimed, every road which is made, and every European settler, who arrives in the country, only serves to give a value to the unimproved tracts of native land which surround the settlements.

25. It is well known that even among European settlers themselves, an absentee proprietor, or one who leaves his land in a state of nature, reaps an advantage by the value given to it, through the cultivation and improvement of the adjacent land. The same process is going on as regards native lands in the vicinity of some of the settlements, and as the Government is now the party anxious to buy and they are growing more unwilling to sell, advantages should be given to them to insure their cooperation in this respect. Nothing it is considered, will be so conducive to this end as the issuing to individual natives, or to the heads of families, a Crown Grant for such portions of land as may be actually required for occupation.

CROWN GRANTS TO NATIVES.

26. Many of them are beginning to see that without such a security their further progress in civilization is impossible, and, while they would as regards the tenure of their dwellings and cultivations be placed on an equal footing with the Europeans, they would be adding to the wealth and resources of the Colony at large.

27. Independent therefore, of its being used as a means of inducing them to part with their surplus lands, it is called for as necessary to promote their individual interests, and whatever tends in their case to this result must be of general advantage. As long as they hold their lands as they do at present they have no incentive worthy of the name, to improve their social condition, or to add permanent improvements to their land; and as regards the adoption of our laws and customs it is not likely that they will readily break off their connections with the native tribes which now afford them the only security they have for their holdings until they are assured of a better. While they continue as communities to hold their land, they will always look to those communities for protection rather than to the British laws and Institutions, which, although brought so near, does not embrace them, in regard to their lands.

28. It is not supposed, that at first, the system could be very extensively carried out, but a beginning is called for and is practicable. The advantages would soon become apparent and be acted on generally.

29. Before a Grant can be issued to a native, it would be necessary that the native title to the piece of land should, as a preliminary step, be transferred to the Crown: and in order to prevent any claims being raised to the land, after it was granted, the same forms should be gone through as if the native title were about to be extinguished by a sale to the Crown for the purposes of resale to Europeans.

30. To give clear and undisputed titles to individual natives, would require mutual concessions on the part of the natives themselves, and the whole of the claimants to the land should be ascertained and be made parties to the transaction, and sign the Transfer to the Crown:—there would then be no danger of any after claims.

31. As regards the expense of the survey, &c., connected with the transaction, the native should it is considered, pay for it, unless it was thought, that he had given an equivalent in cooperating with the Government for the sale of the surplus land of the tribe, to which he belonged.

32. With respect to the nature of the Grant and to whether it should have a restriction preventing the sale of it within a certain number of years:—the Board is of opinion that it should be similar in effect to that issued to Europeans in every respect, as no other form would be appreciated. Their strong attachment to land and the importance with which they view what is requisite to supply their wants would prevent them from parting with it, so as to leave themselves destitute.

LAND FOR HALF CASTE CHILDREN.

33. There is another subject intimately connected with the preceding, as tending to facilitate the acquisition of the surplus lands, and to place an increasing and interesting class of individuals in a position of usefulness. The Half caste race, occupying as they do an intermediate station between the European and Native, have neither the advantages of the one, or the other, and whose future destiny, may, by proper management, be directed in the well being of the Colony, or by neglect, be turned in a contrary course. They are objects of great solicitude to their native relatives, as well as to their European fathers, who desire to secure them sufficient portions of land for their maintenance, and when such is the case there is every reason for the cooperation of the Government. The Board would therefore recommend, provided the native title is in the first place extinguished, that Crown Grants should be issued in their favor in trust to some public functionary.