

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

the attention not only of yourself but of all the inhabitants of the Province will be first directed; and, as being under the present circumstances of Hawke's Bay the most important one, it will be convenient to take it as an example of how the Governor's plan may be practically worked.

The Regulations to be put in force under the Native Districts Regulation Act need not and often will not be applicable to the whole area of a district. They may either be General Regulations applicable to the whole, or Local Regulations applicable only to a portion. Thus it is intended that the General or District Runanga, over which the Civil Commissioner will preside, and which will consist of Resident Magistrates, Native Assessors, and such other members as may be appointed or elected, shall frame regulations on matters of general interest affecting the whole Native population of the District: while the Village Runangas, presided over by the Resident Magistrates under the general direction of the Commissioner, and consisting either of the whole number of adult males or of a selection from them (as may variously be desired in different districts), shall frame Regulations on matters affecting only themselves and their property. Applying this to the circumstances of Hawke's Bay, it may be very desirable and even necessary that the principles on which the occupation of Native land shall lawfully take place at all, should be declared in a General Regulation applicable throughout the District: while it may be equally desirable, having regard to the difference both in ownership and value, that different rules should locally exist, at the recommendation of the Village Runangas, for the occupation of the agricultural plains of Ngaruroro and of the pastoral country of Porangahau or the fern ridges of the Mohaka. In like manner, on other subjects for which the Act provides that Regulations may be made, similar variations may occur between local regulations; but it will readily occur to you that it is best to aim at uniformity wherever the circumstances will permit.

You will observe that Mr. Crosbie Ward has proposed to divide your district into three parts;—viz., to the north, Wairoa and all the country beyond the Mohaka block; to the south, Waipukurau with Rua Taniwha and Porangahau; and the Ahuriri Plains in the middle. For the purposes of the Native Districts Regulation Act, accordingly, the whole Province of Hawke's Bay will remain one district; for the purposes of the new Circuit Courts Act it has been divided into three, to be called the Hundred of Waipukurau, the Hundred of Ngaruroro, and the Hundred of Wairoa. In the Hundred of Ngaruroro, Mr. Ward has proposed that there should be six Assessors, and in the Hundred of Waipukurau ten Assessors: he has not proposed any number for the Wairoa Hundred, because he did not visit that part of the country, but His Excellency's Government consider that four Assessors will be sufficient there. In each of the Hundreds, a Village Runanga is to be constituted, of which the Assessors will be the first members, in addition to the Warden or Chief Karere, who is to be nominated by the Runanga for the Governor's approval; the other members being either all the adult males, or, if that should not be desired by the Natives themselves, a certain number to be selected from them. For the whole District, 20 Kareres are to be appointed by the Runanga subject to the Governor's confirmation; and you will determine, in conjunction with the Village Runanga, how these 20 Kareres are to be distributed in the three Hundreds, having regard to the Native population in each.

The salaries of all the Assessors in the Bay of Plenty District have been fixed at the uniform rate of £30 per annum. In other districts the salaries vary from £20 to £30, rising in a few special cases to £50 for chiefs of high rank and influence. It is not the Governor's wish to force any particular system on the Natives in all the Districts. His Excellency is willing to meet their own views in each District as far as he reasonably can. Assuming the total number of Native Assessors for the whole District to be 20, you are authorized to settle with these Chiefs either for a uniform salary of £30 per annum, or for such a variation of salaries as shall not in any case be more than £50 nor less than £20, nor exceed in the whole the total to which uniform salaries of £30 would amount. The Wardens in each Hundred will receive £20 a year, and the Kareres a uniform pay of £10 a year each, with their clothing. All these salaries are to be paid monthly by you, according to pay lists whereof forms will be supplied.

With regard to European Magistrates, it is the wish of the Government ultimately to station one in each of the three Hundreds. For the present, however, it has been deemed sufficient to appoint Mr. George Sisson Cooper Resident Magistrate of the Waipukurau and Ngaruroro Hundreds; and you are requested to take steps on your arrival at Napier for submitting to the Governor the name of a qualified person as Magistrate for the Wairoa, where there is reason to believe his services are much required.

In conclusion, I have to invite you freely to communicate with the Government on any subject on which you may desire further information and guidance. His Excellency is well aware of the difficulties with which you will have to contend, but he confides—not for the first time—in your self-reliance and prudent judgment to overcome them in the long run. No other part of New Zealand resembles Hawke's Bay in the characteristic feature of the most valuable, level, and fertile land being still retained by the Natives, in the very midst of a growing European population which naturally longs to be allowed to put that land to its proper use of agriculture. Nowhere is the truth more apparent, that institutions of Government for the Natives can be successful only on the condition of securing the co-operation of the colonists and the mutual good-will of the two races. The Government is satisfied to confide this work in the Province of Hawke's Bay to an officer who has served Her Majesty with credit, is well known to the Natives as a good friend in former days, and possesses the feelings and interests of an actual settler.

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HENRY SEWELL.

Lieut.-Colonel Russell,
Civil Commissioner, Napier.