

realized. It is reasonable to think that in a district like the Thames, where, within the past few years, something like £30,000 have been paid to the Natives in the shape of miners' rights fees, some provision might have been made for the education of their children; no provision, however, has been made by the Natives themselves, and I do think that the more that is done for them the more dissatisfied and less self-reliant they become. Before I leave this question, I beg to submit that out of the extensive land purchases that have been made and which are about to be made in this peninsula, suitable reserves for Native school purposes be set apart.

I had hoped the great Native meeting at Whare Kawa—Miranda shore of Hauraki Gulf—would have come off in time to have enabled me to append my notes of the proceedings to this report. This has not been the case, but I shall not fail to furnish the fullest details possible as soon as the gathering takes place.

The sale of the block of land at Ohinemuri, known as the Komata North, containing 880 acres, to a private party by seven out of eight grantees (two of the grantees being Hauhaus and one of them being a seller) caused at the time a great deal of excitement amongst the Natives at that place, and some of the Hauhau party went so far as to threaten an appeal to arms to enforce obedience to their wishes. This, however, has been overruled, and they now content themselves with avowing it as their intention to occupy the land and hold it against all comers. The chief grievance alleged by them was that there were burial grounds on the block which were included in the sale. Whilst at Ohinemuri I privately proposed to the representative of the Hauhau party to have the share of the dissentient from the sale determined and cut out of the block, and to include in such share the burial grounds referred to. He refused to entertain the idea, but at some future time, when their excitement has subsided, a favourable conclusion may be arrived at.

I have, &c.,

E. W. PUCKEY,

Native Agent.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 7.

NATIVE OFFICER, Tauranga, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Civil Commissioner's Office, Tauranga, 8th May, 1874.

In accordance with instructions contained in a circular received from your office, dated 24th April, 1874, requesting me to make the usual annual report on the state of the Natives in the Tauranga district, I have the honor to make the following remarks:—

It is now four years since I undertook the immediate charge of the Natives in this district, under the supervision of the late Civil Commissioner, Henry T. Clarke, Esq. During that period I have found the Ngaiterangi Tribe loyal, well-behaved, and peacefully disposed. When the Waikato war of 1863 broke out, they were influenced by Tamehana Te Waharoa (the New Zealand king-maker) to take up arms against Her Majesty's Government, in consequence of which a considerable portion of their land was confiscated to the Crown. In 1864 they surrendered to certain terms made to them by the then Governor, Sir George Grey. From that time to the present they have borne the character of being the most easily managed, industrious, and best-behaved Natives on the East Coast, and to which I can testify.

Hauhauism in this district may be looked upon as a thing of the past, existing only in name. Those that call themselves Hauhaus mix freely with their European neighbours, and in no way attempt to disturb the peace that both races are enjoying. When my other duties have allowed me time to visit them, I have done so, and found them very hospitable, and inclined to settle peacefully and cultivate their land. A large portion of the Pirirakau hapu have made a permanent settlement at Te Puna, and only return to the edges of the bush to plant their crops of early potatoes.

It is with pleasure that I have to record the total absence of any very serious crime among the Natives during the past year, there having been only three cases of petty larceny, for which the prisoners were sentenced to imprisonment in the Tauranga gaol. There were also a few cases of drunkenness.

Intemperance is greatly on the decrease within the last few months. There has been quite a reformation among the Natives, which is attributed greatly to the example and influence of the chiefs Hori Ngatai and Enoka, who do not permit spirits of any sort to be brought to their settlement. If the rule is infringed on by Natives of other hapus, they are strictly dealt with without regard to the offenders' position or rank in the tribe. In consequence of spirits being forbidden, all the large Native meetings are held there, and which invariably come to an orderly termination.

I am sorry to have to state that the potato crop has again failed in this district. There are many instances where the produce has not exceeded the quantity that was planted. The wheat crop, I am happy to say, has been a great success, enabling the Natives to pay off debts that were contracted for food during the scarcity last winter. One of the hapus (Te Materawaho), Hamiora Tu's party, have not only paid off all their debts, but have also purchased a reaping, thrashing, and winnowing machine, as well as other implements required for farming purposes. The amount of wheat grown and sold by the Natives of this district is over 12,000 bushels, for which they have received money and goods to the amount of £3,300 sterling, the wheat having been sold at the rate of 5s. 6d. per bushel. If the Court under "The Tauranga District Lands Act, 1867" could be continued, and the claims settled, I feel sure that the quantity of wheat grown in this district would be doubled; for, as the planting season comes on, family disputes arise as to the ownership of the land. These disputes, I may say, are the only great hindrances to the friendly feeling existing among the different sections. The Natives are most anxious that the Court should be proceeded with at as early a date as possible. All decisions given as yet by the said Court have been strictly adhered to, and are law among the Natives.

The mortality among the Natives for the past year is rather above the average, particularly among the aged and very young children. It is often the case that the sick do not get proper medical