

SESS. II.—1884.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS IN NATIVE DISTRICTS.

[In Continuation of G.—1A, 1883.]

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

No. 1.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, to OFFICERS in NATIVE DISTRICTS.
(Circular No. 3.)

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 9th April, 1884.

I have the honour, by direction of Mr. Bryce, to request that you will be good enough to forward at your earliest convenience, but not later than the 14th proximo, the usual annual report upon the state of the Natives in your district, for presentation to Parliament.

I have, &c.,

T. W. LEWIS,

Under-Secretary.

No. 2.

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

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Mangonui, 12th May, 1884.

In compliance with the request conveyed in your Circular Letter No. 3, of the 9th ultimo, I have the honour to report upon the state of the Natives in my district, as follows:—

The health of the people during the past year has been almost unprecedentedly bad. There is scarcely a settlement in the district that has not been visited by an epidemic in the form of fever of a virulent type, and very numerous deaths have occurred. The sickness has been almost entirely confined to the young people, ranging in age from about eighteen years downwards. Some doubt would appear to exist as to what fever this really is, but many of the symptoms are undoubtedly those of typhoid. It is highly infectious as regards the children, but adults do not appear to be affected by it to nearly the same extent. A peculiarity too lies in the fact that children of European parentage mingle with impunity with the infected Natives, but entirely escape the contagion. The settlements mostly affected have been Peria, Pukepoto, Te Kao, Parapara, Ahipara, and Herekino, and the mortality has been greatest at the three last-mentioned places.

The Native Medical Officer, Dr. Trimnell, has had seventy-five cases of fever under his charge. Of these, eleven have succumbed to the disease. The teachers of the various Native schools throughout the district have done their best to treat, medicinally and otherwise, the many patients brought under their notice, and they have done good service in this respect. The most successful among them has been Mr. Masters, of Pukepoto. Out of some thirty cases treated by him not one had a fatal termination. I regret, however, to say that after the lapse of about two months the fever has reappeared in the neighbourhood of Pukepoto within the last few days, and already two deaths have occurred. Liberal supplies of drugs have been granted by the Native Office to several of the teachers, and in many instances these have been put to good service.

The causes of this sad state of things are not far to seek. They have been stated again and again, and it is not necessary to recapitulate them here. The Natives themselves are perfectly well aware of them. They may be summed up thus: The choice of low-lying, unhealthy, and damp situations as the sites for kaingas, and an utter and persistent disregard of the most ordinary sanitary precautions. It is quite hopeless to induce a better state of things by persuasion and reasoning. Legislation alone, and that strictly carried out, will alter the existing state of things. There are, I know, many and great difficulties in the way of this: whether they are insuperable is a matter of opinion. At meetings of Natives at various times I have generally, when present, taken the opportunity to say something on the subject of sanitary laws,