

here, and were returned as such on the last occasion, it will be perceived that the actual increase is only 13.

The total of half-castes this year is only 93, whereas in 1881 the number returned was 141. The difference in these numbers is accounted for thus: In 1881 several large families of half-castes were included in the Native census, instead of the European, amongst whom they should have been calculated. Care has been taken to excise all half-castes from this return who are not living as members of Native tribes. The difference is 48, from which 17 must be subtracted for those who are chiefly permanently residing out of the district, and the remainder 31 added to the 13 already mentioned as the increase, will give the total as 44, which is a small fraction more than 1 per cent. increase on the last census.

Great care has been taken in compiling this census, and it will be seen that with the exception of the Urewera "children" each individual has been noted by name. Neither the names nor exact numbers of the Urewera children could be ascertained, therefore they are given approximately, but names are given in all cases where obtainable. The majority of the Urewera Tribe having changed their names since the last census, it was impossible to compare the old lists with those compiled on the present occasion by Captain Rushton, who undertook to collect the census of this tribe with the assistance of the chief Hemi Kakitu, none but the few well-known chiefs being shown by their former names. With the exception of the typhoid fever epidemic at Omarumutu, through which some eight members of the Whakatohea lost their lives, the Natives throughout the district have enjoyed fair health since the last census was taken.

Only four violent deaths have taken place since 1881, viz., two persons killed through carts capsizing, one drowned, and one Native girl through hanging herself. The total extent of their crops are as under, but I fear they are far from correct, it being so difficult to estimate small patches, or to get an exact idea of the size of some of them from their peculiar shapes. It will be noticed that the Urewera crops are small when compared with the number of that tribe, but this may be accounted for as follows: The people preserve great quantities of birds and other bush products, which form a considerable part of their food. There are 2,760 sheep, 2,940 head of cattle, and 7,380 pigs in this district, besides the following area of crops: Potatoes, 1,757 acres; wheat, 610½ acres; other crops, 2,139½ acres. This latter consists principally of maize and kumaras. It will be noticed that there are not many aged Natives—by this I mean persons over sixty—not so many as one would expect to find in so large a population. There are only four bedridden people in the whole of the Urewera country.

This return may be looked upon as showing a slight increase in the Native population of this district, which however, is barely perceptible to those residing in their midst; but I think I may safely say that there is a small but sure increase on this occasion, not altogether attributable to the accession of adults from other parts not heretofore included within this district, but actually from an increase of births over the deaths.

R. S. BUSH, R.M.

Resident Magistrate's Office, Opotiki, 4th May, 1886.

No. 9.

MR. JAMES BOOTH, R.M., Gisborne, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Gisborne, 27th March, 1886.

In reply to your circular-letter of the 30th December last I have the honour herewith to forward census returns of the Maori and half-caste population of this district (County of Cook). Much care has been taken in obtaining the required information. At first much difficulty was experienced, as the Natives were very suspicious, particularly with regard to their crops and live stock; but the Sub-enumerator reports that, after he was once fairly started, he received great assistance from the chiefs at the various kaingas, and thus succeeded in obtaining a satisfactory return.

It has been found to be a rather difficult matter to define the chief tribes of the district, as the Ngatikahungunu and Porourangi (Ngatiporou) Tribes overlap each other, giving rise to much confusion, and consequently sectional tribes have been formed, viz., Rongowhakaata, Whanau-amahaki, Te Itanga-a-Hauti, and Whanau-a-rua being presumably but sub-tribes of the two principal ones.

The Maoris in this district are divided into three religious sections, viz., Church of England, Mormons, and Hauhaus (or followers of Te Kooti), who, during his late visit to Wairoa, has revived his influence amongst certain classes, and has now many adherents, chiefly in the inland districts of Poverty Bay.

The return will show that the Natives are not cultivating extensively, and, as their crops in certain localities have suffered severely from the late drought, they will, I am afraid, be in great straits for food during the ensuing winter.

They appear to be giving much attention to rearing stock on their lands. In some districts they have a great number of cattle and horses, and many of them are trying sheep-farming on a small scale.

In many of the principal kaingas where timber can be obtained the houses are built chiefly in European style; in these kaingas also they have erected substantial churches, fitted up in European fashion. At Tokomaru the church is furnished with a large American organ, which is ably performed upon by a Native girl, who was educated at the Hukatere school, Napier.