

No. 16.

Mr. W. RENNELL, Native Officer, New Plymouth, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 29th March, 1886.

In obedience to your instructions contained in letter No. 17 of the 30th December last, I have the honour to report to you that I have had a census of Natives in my district taken, and now forward the result to you, the most noticeable features being an apparent increase in numbers, the small proportion of women as compared with men, and the still smaller proportion of children as compared with adults.

In an ordinary healthy community the females are found to outnumber the males, and the children to equal the adults in number, or nearly so. In the Native case in my district the females are 25 per cent. less in number than the males, and the children only 25 per cent. of the total number. The result points its own moral.

With regard to the apparent increase in numbers, I consider it due to the fact that many Natives are included now that were never taken before, such as inland of Mokau, and similar places, and to the great assistance afforded by being able to refer to the names in the hapu Crown grants lately issued under the West Coast Commission.

I think the census can still only be looked upon here as approximate, as the greatest difficulty was experienced in taking it, the Natives as a rule refusing to give any information and referring all inquirers to Te Whiti. Another great drawback was the fact of over 1,000 men, women, and children travelling about just at the time the census was being taken.

There has been no special serious epidemic in this district since last census, and consumption in all its forms is still the principal complaint.

The sown grasses are nearly all English grasses, which have sown themselves. The number of pigs is only approximate, as the greater part are running about the fern and bush; and the same remark, in a less degree, will apply to the cattle.

In conclusion, I have to state my belief that I consider the race to be steadily decreasing in this district.

I have, &c.,

W. RENNELL,

Native Officer.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 17.

Inspector ATCHISON, Nelson, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Police Office, Nelson, 12th March, 1886.

I have the honour to forward the census taken of the Maori population in the places indicated in your letter dated the 30th December, 1885. It will be observed from the Enumerators' summary (herewith) that the census show a total of 493 persons, as against 530 shown in the census for 1881. The decrease, 37, is not, I think, attributable to any special or serious disease or epidemic, but it may be accounted for by the fact that many Natives left their abodes in this Island in the latter part of 1881 for Parihaka, and have not since returned. Deaths may be chiefly traced to pleurisy and consumption, but on the whole the Native population appear to enjoy good health.

The Natives residing in and around Pelorus are reported as being as a rule industrious, in so far as obtaining work is concerned, but improvident, spending what they earn in liquor.

I beg to enclose vouchers for expenses incurred by the various Sub-enumerators employed in this work.

I have, &c.,

T. W. Lewis, Esq., Under-Secretary,
Native Office, Wellington.

J. ATCHISON,
Enumerator and Inspector of Police.

No. 18.

Inspector PENDER, Christchurch, to the COMMISSIONER, Armed Constabulary.

SIR,—

N.Z. Constabulary, Inspector's Office, Christchurch, 20th March, 1886.

In compliance with a circular dated the 30th December last, received from the Native Office, I have the honour to forward herewith a census taken of the Maoris in the Counties of Akaroa, Amuri, Ashley, Ashburton, Selwyn, and Cheviot.

The total population residing at the various settlements is 490, consisting of 205 males and 240 females. The slight decrease, 55, since last census is not attributable to any particular cause. The general health of the Natives has been good; no epidemic has visited any of the pas since last census. At most of the pas they appear to recognize the benefits arising from attention to sanitary measures about their habitations. They are on the whole a sober, orderly people; the majority of them in comparatively good circumstances, and in some of the settlements good dwelling-houses with gardens attached have been put up. During harvest and shearing, and grass-seeding time, they earn good wages with Europeans.