

The sub-enumerator for Hawera County states,—

In general the villages are clean, and the people living after European methods. Weather-board houses prevail, and I noticed that they are now being built well off the ground, also that bedsteads are more commonly used than hitherto. The old communism regarding meals is now seldom seen, each family observing its own domestic arrangements. The health of the people is good. Parihaka has still a pernicious influence among the Natives: some of the young men are desirous of engaging in the milking industry and cattle-raising, but owing to the elders being strong Parihaka partisans and adverse to any individual effort of working, these persons are thwarted in their efforts.

Judging from my knowledge in the past of the Maori population of various districts and pas, I regret to say that I think the Native people are decreasing.

Numerous proofs of the industrious desires of the young men are to be seen on the roadsides, where they are preparing road-metal.

I regret that I have not been able to make this report sooner.

I have, &c.,

C. R. BAYLEY, Enumerator.

The Under-Secretary, Department of Justice, Wellington.

8. WANGANUI, ETC.

SIR,—

Wellington, 25th May, 1906.

I have the honour to inform you that, acting in accordance with your letter of the 12th February, 1906, I have completed the taking of the census of the Maori population in the ten districts assigned to my supervision—viz., Waitotara, Wanganui, Waimarino, Rangitikei, Manawatu, Horowhenua, Kairanga, Oroua, Kiwitea, and Pohangina—and I herewith, under separate cover, forward you all the books and papers and sub-enumerators' reports in connection with the same. I have to state that I was considerably handicapped by not being able to frank my correspondence, and this meant delay in the accomplishment of my duties.

I find that the total number of Maoris, including half-castes living as members of Maori tribes, in these districts as a whole, is 4,068, being an increase of 199 as compared with the census of 1901. There is a slight increase in the number of Maoris, fifteen years of age and under.

I appointed one sub-enumerator to each district, with the exception of Pohangina and Kiwitea, which were easily attended to by one man. I find that there are no Maoris in these two last-named districts, a fact that has existed for a number of years, as I perceive, on referring to the census of 1901, that there were only three persons enumerated in Pohangina during the taking of the census of that year. With regard to the other districts, I find that Waitotara has a Maori population of 348, and Wanganui 782, which, bracketed—as was the case in 1901—shows a total of 1,130, being a decrease of 559. Waimarino, however, has a Maori population of 728, and it is probable that this district may have formed a part of either Waitotara or Wanganui Counties at the time the previous census was taken. Manawatu shows an increase of 8 souls. Kairanga has a population of 166, but, there being no previous census record of this district with which to compare, I am unable to say whether there is an increase or otherwise. Rangitikei shows an increase of 98. In Horowhenua there is a decrease of 21. Oroua shows a decided difference in its Maori population, there being a decrease of 219. This may, however, be due to the fact that Oroua has had its former area of territory somewhat diminished by the creation of the Kairanga County. I cannot say that the decrease can be attributed to mortality, nor can I attribute the increases mainly to a favourable birth-rate. I would say that both these matters can claim that their existence is due to migratory causes, arising from the fact that large numbers of Maoris have been forced to wander from one district to another in search of employment, whereby they may obtain means of providing themselves with food during the winter months, a necessity caused by the disastrous effects of the potato-blight and other uncontrollable evils that have attended their cultivations.

The health of the Maoris appears on the whole to be good. They have been free from any epidemic or serious disease, with the exception of one case of *ngerengere* (a form of leprosy), at a place called Raorikia, situated on the upper reaches of the Wanganui River; and it is reported that a few persons living on the Whangaeahu River are affected by a skin-disease called *hakihiaki* (itch). But I understand that the Maori medical authorities are paying these cases the necessary attention. The sanitary conditions of the majority of the kaingas have been favourably reported upon, a matter of credit to the Marae Councils.

It is quite apparent that the Maoris are preferring the European mode of living, and that communism is on the wane. From my own observation, and from information supplied by sub-enumerators, I gather that the old retrogressive Maori habits and customs are fast vanishing. This, I am sure, will tend towards the general betterment of the race. I found a great number of Maori homes luxuriously furnished. Some of the young women appear to possess a thorough knowledge of proper domestic affairs, and the finer arts, such as music, painting, and carving, also form a part of their accomplishments. Some of the young men are very well educated indeed, and it is they who are mainly instrumental in removing the disagreeable habits of the older Maori. Many of these young men are employed in offices, whilst others are learning trades. Quite a number of Maori men are employed in the various flax-mills, others on road-construction, bush-felling, &c.

Several of these districts have great cause for demanding greater facilities from an educational point of view, there being cases where a number of children are being neglected in this respect, owing to the absence of schools, or the distance being too great to enable them to attend.