

1911.
NEW ZEALAND.

CENSUS OF THE MAORI POPULATION

(PAPERS RELATING TO).

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

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HON. THE NATIVE MINISTER.

I HAVE the honour to lay before you the preliminary results of the census of the Native population which was taken during the month of March last. It is not possible to take the Maori census in one night, as is done in the case of the European census, nor is the same degree of accuracy to be expected in the enumeration; but I believe the work has been done as thoroughly as circumstances would permit. The total Maori population amounted to 49,350 persons, an increase for the five years of 1,617 persons, but these figures are liable to readjustment, being only the first rough results taken from the Enumerator's summaries.

The first Native census was taken in the year 1874; but in 1867, and again in 1871, the various officers residing in Native districts had been instructed to furnish estimates of the number of Maoris in their respective districts. These estimates were, however, admittedly merely approximate, and must be regarded as imperfect. Since 1874 a census of the Native population has been taken coincidentally with the European census. The following table shows the population at these respective periods:—

Year.		Persons.	Increase.	Decrease.
1867 (approximate estimate)	.. ..	38,540	..	..
1871	.. ..	37,502	..	..
1874 (first census)	.. ..	45,470	..	..
1878	.. ..	43,595	..	1,875
1881	.. ..	44,097	502	..
1886	.. ..	41,969	..	2,128
1891	.. ..	41,993	24	..
1896	.. ..	39,854	..	2,139
1901	.. ..	43,143	3,289	..
1906	.. ..	47,731	4,588	..
1911	.. ..	49,350	1,617	..

The fluctuations exhibited in the above table cannot be regarded as normal, and conclusions deduced from the figures must be regarded to a large degree as conjectural. It was doubted whether the large decrease shown by the census of 1896 was a real decrease, or merely due to the non-inclusion of a number of Natives either by accident or through refusals to give proper information to the sub-enumerators. However, the increase shown by the present census may be taken as a fair index of the position. The figures quoted for 1911 do not include the Maori population of the Chatham Islands, which have not yet come to hand. In 1906 the total number of persons was 202. In addition to the foregoing totals, there were enumerated with the European census the following half-castes: Males, 1,475; females, 1,402.

It may be assumed that to arrive at the true census of the Maori people it is necessary that all half-castes and intermediates between a half-caste and a Maori should be under one enumeration. If this were done, the figures for 1911, assuming that the population of the Chatham Islands has been stationary, would read 52,429 persons.

It is obvious that any real increase in the Maori population must arise from an excess of births over deaths—in other words, the Maoris must reproduce themselves, as, unlike the European population, they cannot be recruited from outside. It is therefore necessary to ascertain whether there is any increase in the number of children since the previous census. The table attached hereto shows the number of persons under the age of fifteen at the present census to be 19,866, while in 1906 it was 18,417, an increase of 1,449 persons during the five years. In further support of this contention, it will be noticed that there are 6,968 persons under the age of five years.