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NEW ZEALAND.

FURTHER REPORTS FROM OFFICERS IN NATIVE DISTRICTS.

(REPORT BY MR. A. MACKAY, COMMISSIONER OF NATIVE RESERVES, ON STATE OF MIDDLE ISLAND NATIVES AND THEIR ALLEGED CLAIMS ON ACCOUNT OF UNFULFILLED PROMISES.)

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

A. MACKAY, Esq., Commissioner of Native Reserves, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Reserves Office, Nelson, 24th June, 1874.

In compliance with your circular letter, No. 3, of April 24th, I have the honor to submit the following report on Native affairs in my district:—

In pursuance with the instructions contained in your letter, No. 75, of February 2nd, I visited the southern provinces for the purpose of inquiring into and reporting upon the several subjects enumerated therein, and have transmitted detailed reports to your office on the settlement of some of the most important questions, and will furnish the necessary information respecting the adjustment of the remainder as speedily as circumstances will admit.

Amongst other matters that have been accomplished, is the adjustment of the question raised by the Natives at Riverton concerning their right to the foreshore contiguous to their reserve, and the final apportionment of the latter amongst the rightful claimants on a fair and equitable basis, with a view to permanent occupation and individual improvement; and in furtherance of this plan, in order to establish exclusive individual interests in the soil, I have recommended, in my report on the subject, that the present mode of tenure should be superseded by issuing to each allottee a Crown grant, making the land absolutely unalienable except by lease for 21 years. This condition is necessary in fulfilment of the terms of the deed of cession, that the reserves made for Native purposes within the Murihiku Block should be set apart for the vendors and their children for ever. The other reserves in the Southland district being unsuitable for subdivision, it is proposed merely to issue grants to trustees elected by the body of claimants in trust for the whole, on the same principle as the grants proposed for the Aparama (Riverton) Reserve.

The settlement of the question at Riverton will confer a great boon on the occupants, as, under the former system of tenure, they had no individual interest in improvement, and consequently no encouragement to industry. The same cause also has prevented them hitherto from enclosing their property with a substantial fence; and this in itself operates very unfavourably to their interests, as many of the European residents in the neighbourhood have taken advantage of these circumstances to run their cattle on the Native land without making the owners any remuneration, against which injustice the Natives have endeavoured to obtain legal redress on several occasions without avail. A case brought recently before the Bench at Riverton was dismissed because, according to the opinion of the Court, the Natives had no right to prosecute for trespass, as they did not hold their land under Crown grant. This seems to have been a mistaken view of the matter, as “The Otago Impounding Ordinance, 1872,” clause 10, provides for the recovery of damages at common law for cattle trespassing on unenclosed land; and in clause 41 clearly defines that the word “occupier” of any land shall be taken to mean the person having the use or occupation of such land.

I took the opportunity when in the South to collate a return of the half-caste families to be provided with land in fulfilment of promises made on the cession of native territory to the Crown within the boundaries of the Ngaitahu, Moutuku, and Stewart’s Island purchases. The claims of these people were brought before the Legislature in 1869, and the Legislative Council passed a resolution, dated 24th August of that year (*vide* Sessional Paper, D. No. 20, 1870), praying His Excellency the Governor to give immediate effect to the report of the Public Petitions Committee on the subject.

In pursuance with the purport of the above-named resolution, Mr. Cooper, the then Under Secretary for Native Affairs, proceeded to Otago and Southland, in the month of April, 1870, to place matters in train for settlement; but, on inquiry being made, it was found that nothing definite could be done to carry out the intention in its entirety until the Native reserves and old land claims on Stewart’s Island were surveyed, as a number of half-castes were to be provided with land there. This

obstacle has now been got rid of, the survey of the reserves having been completed; and as provision is made by "The Stewart's Island Grants Act, 1873," for the execution of grants to half-castes born on the island, all further difficulty is removed as far as those coming under that category is concerned, but as there are others equally entitled to a similar concession, it will be necessary to take steps to legalize the dedication of land to them in a like manner.

With a view to expedite the settlement of the question, and to enable the half-castes entitled to land in the neighbourhood of Foveaux Strait to select their several portions, I made application to the Waste Land Board at Invercargill (which was granted) to temporarily reserve from sale certain lands particularized in a schedule accompanying the applications.

A return containing the names of the claimants, places of abode, and the locality in which they have already selected or desire to select their land, was also furnished to the Commissioner of Crown Lands at the same time. This, and other information pertaining to the question, I purpose forwarding for the information of the Government in a separate letter.

In fulfilment of your instructions, I also visited the majority of the schools, and will report separately on the subject.

The condition of the Natives residing at the settlements I visited in the South, excepting at Otago Heads and Waikouaiti, is much the same as it was six years ago; they do not appear to have improved in either industry or their mode of living, and their cultivations are still on the same limited scale. In the early days of the colony, when they found a ready market for their produce, they were stimulated to greater attention to agricultural pursuits: but now, owing to their incapacity to compete with the European settlers in the production of grain and potatoes, they have drifted into indolent habits, and in many instances prefer letting their land, though the rental received forms but a trifle of what they might obtain by cultivating it themselves.

A number of the young men find employment on the stations in mustering and shearing seasons, and during harvest, with the farmers; some also own boats, and go fishing, sealing, and whaling, and are able to make a fair living in that way: but a large proportion of the population are incapacitated for hard labour, either through age, ill health, or other causes.

At Otago Heads and Waikouaiti the social condition of the people is far more satisfactory than at the other settlements in the South. Their dispersion into families has evidently effected a great improvement amongst them, and there is an evident desire to raise themselves to the level of the Europeans. Many of the residents possess neat weatherboard houses, and the most of the land is enclosed with substantial fences.

At Otago Heads the Natives own over 1,000 sheep, besides a number of cattle and horses; and at Waikouaiti they own over 2,000 sheep, as well as cattle and horses. They also possess carts, ploughs, a threshing machine, and other agricultural implements. At the latter place the Natives are becoming alive to the importance of securing education for their children as a means of elevating their status as a people, and have made application to have a school established there. There also appears to be a general desire on the part of the residents to have their land subdivided with a view to individual occupation, as they find that the system of holding their property in common affords too great facilities for the idle to prey on the industrious.

The proposed main trunk line of railway will pass through the Purakaunui and Waikouaiti Reserves, and will take about 20 acres out of each. The Natives are asking a high price for compensation, and they certainly deserve to be well paid, as the line will absorb a great deal of their best land, besides the inconvenience caused by severance.

Poverty is increasing amongst the Natives at some of the settlements, especially at Kaiapoi; there the residents have required assistance from the Government during the past season. The Natives have nothing left them now as a means of subsistence, since the timber on the reserves has been consumed, but their farms of 14 acres, which, instead of cultivating, they frequently lease to the European settlers for the sake of obtaining a little ready money, but as the area owned by each individual is but small, a very insufficient income is realized. A much larger area is necessary to afford subsistence for a Maori than for a European, owing to the difference in their mode of tillage. The Native system of husbandry is a very exhaustive one to the soil, and so soon as it is worn out it becomes of no further use to them. This forms the chief cause of their impoverished condition. In former years, before the country was occupied by Europeans, they could roam all over it in search of edibles, but now they are hemmed in by civilization, and have no chance of obtaining the necessary supplies should the few acres they cultivate fail to produce a sufficiency. Every year as the settlement of the country progresses, the Natives are necessarily restricted to narrower and narrower limits, until they no longer possess the freedom adapted to their mode of life. The settlers hunt down, for pastime or other purposes, the birds which constituted their food, or, for purposes of improvement, drain the swamps and watercourses from which they obtained their supplies of fish; their ordinary subsistence failing them, and lacking the energy or ability to supplement their means of livelihood by labour, they lead a life of misery and semi-starvation.

All this might have been obviated in the case of the Southern Natives, had the precaution been taken to set apart land to provide for the wants of the Natives, in anticipation of the probable effect of colonization on their former habits. It would have been an easy matter for the Government to have imposed this tax on the landed estate, on the acquisition of Native territory. Such reserves would have afforded easy relief to the people who had ceded their lands for a trifle, and formed the only possible way of paying them with justice.

Two political meetings have been held by the Southern Natives since the commencement of the present year; one at Otago Heads, in January, and the other at Kaiapoi, in April,—the object being to ascertain the opinion of the majority of the people as to the course to be pursued to effectuate the fulfilment of certain promises made to them on the cession of their territory to the Crown; and whether Hori Kerei Taiaroa, the Native member for the Middle Island, was justified in asking the General Assembly, last Session, for £2,000,000 in satisfaction of their claims.

The Natives appear to have taken up the question in earnest, and have made up their minds to appeal to the Imperial Government if they cannot obtain redress in the Colony.

Considering the grievous delay the Natives have been subject to, it is highly important that a final adjustment of these questions should be effected as speedily as possible, in order that the Government may no longer be reproached with overlooking their rights.

The general question of the obligations of the Government on account of unfulfilled promises to those Natives, has been before the House of Representatives the last two Sessions, and their right to consideration admitted; but the chief difficulty hitherto has been to determine the value of these promises; and, with a view to facilitate the settlement of the question, I propose to submit certain propositions for the consideration of the Government.

According to the evidence given by the Hon. Mr. Mantell, on the 27th April, 1872, before the Select Committee of the House of Representatives appointed to inquire into and report upon the unfulfilled promises to the Natives in the Middle Island, the promises concerning the establishment of schools and hospitals, &c., for their benefit, are confined to the Ngaitahu Block, purchased by Mr. Kemp in 1840, for which the sum of £2,000 was paid; but, in completing the settlement of the question, Mr. Mantell was instructed by Lieut.-Governor Eyre to inform the Natives that the money paid them was not the only or principal consideration for the cession of their land, but that certain benefits should be conferred upon them besides, obligations that have never been carried out to the present time—a period of 26 years—excepting in a manner that cannot effect the general question.

The land included within the Ngaitahu Block comprises all that tract of country bounded towards the North by a line drawn from Kaiapoi on the east to Cape Foulwind on the west, on the East and West by the ocean, and on the South by a line drawn from the Nuggets to Milford Haven, exclusive of Bank's Peninsula, supposed then to have been sold to the French, and a block of 400,000 acres in the Province of Otago, purchased in 1844 for the New Edinburgh settlement. The aggregate area of the block may be set down at 20,000,000 acres.

It is evident, from the tenor of the instructions to Mr. Mantell, that the Government of the day looked upon the price paid for the territory comprised in the aforesaid block as a very inadequate one. That point being established, the next thing to ascertain is the value of the said promises; but, as there is no formula upon which a calculation can be based, I would beg to recommend that an average basis should be adopted as the most equitable mode of deciding the question. Should this plan be acquiesced in, it will be easy to calculate what would have been a fair price to have paid the Natives, all circumstances considered, supposing the full amount had been paid to them at the time, and on that being ascertained, the final cost of settling the matter should be borne by the Provinces who have benefited by the acquisition of the territory, in proportionate shares, either in money or land or both, according to the amount determined on as an equitable price, less the sum already paid to the Natives. As a means of arriving at a decision with regard to a sufficient price for the block, the average amount paid by the New Zealand Company for land acquired by them from the Natives in various parts of the colony, together with the price paid by the Government for the purchase of land in the North Island, might afford a comparison.

The first purchase effected by the New Zealand Company in the colony averaged about a halfpenny an acre, but in addition to that one-tenth of the land was to be set apart for the benefit of the vendors. The average rate paid by the Government in the early days of the colony for the acquisition of land was threepence an acre. The price paid by the New Zealand Company for the Otago Block in 1844 was under three-halfpence an acre; and by a Return made to an Order of the House of Representatives in 1861 (E. No. 10), the average price paid by the Government for land in the North Island appears to exceed sixpence an acre.

If it should be decided to pay the Natives a sum of money in final satisfaction of their claims, the amount determined on should be invested in the funds, or else on freehold security, to produce a fund for the purpose of carrying out the original intention; or, if land is appropriated instead, it should be vested in trustees for the same object.

It will probably be urged as an argument in favour of the low price paid for the land compassed within the Ngaitahu Block that a large proportion of it was unoccupied territory, and did not belong to the small and scattered remnant of the Ngaitahu Tribe, who, but for the arrival of the Europeans, might probably have been exterminated by the more powerful tribes from the North Island, who had formerly invaded a portion of the country, but that it became, on the assumption of British supremacy in 1840, the property of the Crown. It is submitted, however, that this view of the question cannot be adduced *ex post facto*, as the right of the Natives to dispose of the land had been previously admitted.

According to Native custom, the Ngaitahu Tribe were the undisputed owners of that portion of the South Island comprised within the Provinces of Canterbury and Otago. Their ancestors, from whom they inherited the soil, conquered the country about 300 years ago from the Ngatimamoe, a powerful tribe who formerly owned the whole of the said territory together with a large portion of the former Province of Nelson.

All who are conversant with the question of Native tenure are aware that the Maoris base their claims to land mainly on the following grounds:—1. Hereditary claims; 2. Lands obtained by conquest; 3. By occupation or possession. Hereditary claims are considered the best. The right to land taken by conquest depended on its being occupied by the conquerors. Mere occupation did not give a valid title; it required to be supported by other claims. It will therefore be perceived that the claims of the Ngaitahu to this territory are good on all three grounds, and that they or their progenitors or those from whom they claimed title had actually had occupation of the land so claimed for a long period of years.

In the instructions from the Colonial Office to Governor Hobson, in 1839, he was enjoined to obtain, by equitable contracts with the Natives, the cession to the Crown of such waste lands as might be required for the occupation of settlers resorting to New Zealand; but care was to be taken, in the acquisition of land from them, not to purchase any territory which they required for their own comfort, safety, or subsistence. Here, therefore, was an admission on the part of the Crown, that the Natives were entitled to dispose of their waste lands as well as those they occupied or enjoyed.

The recognition of the title of the Natives to the sovereignty of their country, and the property in its soil, by the Imperial Government, involved the necessity of obtaining by treaty the right of

pre-emption, and by the cession of this right the Crown acquired a right to extinguish by purchase all such lands as the Natives should be disposed to alienate.

But if it is asserted that, in virtue of its prerogative, the Crown had a right to absorb the waste lands of the Natives for the public benefit, the engagement entered into with them for the right of pre-emption was a mere absurdity, as it was an undertaking on the part of the Crown to purchase that which already belonged to it, for unless there existed a right to sell there could be no right to purchase.

The intention of the Crown in acquiring the right of pre-emption, was to prevent the Natives injuring themselves by parting with their land for a nominal consideration to private individuals; but a practical injustice was unintentionally done them through the very means which were taken to afford protection, as they were deprived thereby of the privilege of offering their land to the highest bidder, and had no alternative left but to keep the land, or sell it at the Government price.

It may perhaps be argued in opposition to this, that the advantages the Natives have obtained by the occupation of New Zealand by the Europeans outweigh the value of their land, even if they had parted with all they did not require, without compensation, as they had neither means nor the knowledge to turn it to account. Furthermore, that they had no right to expect that their property should obtain a value which it could never have acquired otherwise than by the protection of the Crown, and that so long as they received the same price for it as they were disposed to accept before the Treaty of Waitangi, there is no cause to complain that an injustice has been done them.

Reference, however, to a Report on the Settlement of Land Claims laid before the House of Representatives in 1862 (D. No. 10), will show that the rate per acre paid by private individuals for the acquisition of Native land before the Proclamation of 1840, was higher per acre than the price since paid by the Government.

The Natives for many years past have been loud in their complaints against the Government for purchasing their land for a small sum, and re-selling it at a comparatively high rate to European settlers; and with a view to reconcile them to this system, they have been informed that the Crown merely receives the money so paid as a trustee for the public, to be applied for their benefit in the construction of roads and bridges, and the promotion of other works of public utility; but they are not slow to perceive that those advantages would still be theirs, even if they had received a more advanced price for the land.

There are persons who hold that justice does not concern human nature in general,—that it is a refinement very good and useful for civilized people,—but that it may be dispensed with to a great extent where uncivilized races are concerned; but even the least scrupulous will probably admit that a payment equal to the tenth of a penny per acre for a territory comprising some of the finest land in the South Island, and equal in size to Ireland, cannot be considered an equitable compensation to the original owners.

It would seem by a despatch dated 25th March, 1848, from Governor Grey to Earl Grey, having reference to a visit of the former to the Middle Island, and also to the tenor of the directions given to Lieut.-Governor Eyre respecting the purchase of the territory comprised within the Ngaitahu Block, that the settlement of the Native claims was intended to be made on the following basis,—viz., that ample reserves for the present and reasonable future wants should be set apart for the claimants and their descendants, and registered as reserves for that purpose, and after the boundaries of those reserves had been marked out, then the right of the Natives to the whole of the remainder of the block should be purchased for £2,000, the payments to be spread over a period of four or five years. The amount fixed on was considered to be as large a sum as they could profitably spend, or was likely to be of any benefit to them.

The most important consideration that arises in the colonization of a country inhabited by a race like the Maoris, is, how to give them a substantial equivalent for the lands they surrender; as a payment in perishable articles, or even in money to be spent in such articles, cannot be considered a fair equivalent for a possession so valuable as the soil. The most equitable mode of payment, and one that could have been easily effected at the time, would have been to appropriate a certain proportion of the land ceded by the Natives as a provision for their advancement in the scale of social and political existence, which would have conferred on them the advantages they were fully entitled to receive through the occupation of their former territory by the European community.

The advantage of this description of reserve is the production of an independent fund as a provision for the future wants of the Natives, besides securing to them a property continually increasing in value with the progress of the colony. Such reserves as these, with the advantages that would have accrued, would have been only a poor compensation to the owners of the Ngaitahu Block for the cession of so large a tract of fertile country for a meagre cash payment.

It will be found, on perusing the correspondence on the subject, that some of the details of the purchase were carried out at variance with the original intentions, and that instead of the reserves for the Natives being marked off as was contemplated, and then the remainder of the district purchased, the money was paid in the first place, and the reserves left to be determined at a future time, a plan which placed the Natives entirely in the hands of the Government as to the quantity of land to be set apart.

The extent ultimately appropriated to the purpose was 6,359 acres, a quantity that can hardly be considered to come under the meaning of “ample reserves for the present and future wants” of a population of 637 individuals, the number of Natives to be then provided for within the block. It is true that by the terms of the deed of purchase the Governor was empowered to set apart additional lands for the Natives when the country was surveyed, but even this condition was not fulfilled until May, 1868, a period of 20 years after the date of the engagement.

Besides the original sum of £2,000 paid in 1848, an additional amount of £300 was paid in 1860 to the Natives living on the western side of the Ngaitahu Block, for the extinction of their title over the country west of the main range of the island, extending from Milford Haven to Kaurangi, a point north of the River Buller.

The aggregate quantity of land set apart for the Natives within the boundaries of Kemp's purchase

since 1848 to the present time, amounts to 18,260 acres 3 roods 16 perches, made up as follows, viz.,—6,359 acres set apart immediately after the purchase, 1,170 acres 2 roods 16 perches subsequently added by the General and Provincial Governments, 5,937 acres 1 rood 16 perches reserved on the West Coast in 1860, and 5,063 acres 2 roods 24 perches awarded by the Native Land Court in 1868 in final satisfaction of the engagements in the deed of purchase. Of the total quantity, 6,552 acres and 2 roods are situate in Canterbury, 5,937 acres 1 rood 16 perches in Westland, and 5,770 acres and 3 roods in Otago. The reserves in Westland belong solely to the persons who were parties to the sale of the district in 1860.

The chief measures that have been undertaken in the southern provinces to carry out the promises made to the Natives to provide them with schools and hospitals, &c., was an attempt made in 1857 by Governor Browne to build a hostelry for the Natives at Otago, which was frustrated by the Assembly declining to vote the money for the purpose.

An arrangement was also made about the same time by the Government, when handing over the hospital at Dunedin to the Provincial authorities, that the Native sick should be attended to, and that a dispensary should be established and medical aid extended to them at their villages, in addition to the maintenance and relief of Native patients admitted into the hospital, an arrangement that seems to have been entirely disregarded. In 1865, in furtherance of the intention to provide medical aid for the sick, the General Government appointed medical officers at all the principal settlements. No schools were established until 1868, excepting one at Kaiapoi, towards which the General and Provincial Governments contributed £750. The schools now in operation are conducted under the general scheme of education that obtains in the Colony for the Natives under the Native Schools Act, and cannot be considered as special institutions.

Mr. Hunter Browne was appointed in 1865 to administer Native affairs in the southern province, but, although various recommendations were made by him as to the best mode of carrying out the unfulfilled pledges of the Government, nothing of any importance was effected.

A hostelry was erected at Lyttelton in 1865 at a cost of £500, including the price of the land.

Small sums have been contributed from time to time by the Government towards the erection of buildings for religious purposes at several of the settlements. The total sum expended for all purposes, inclusive of the proportion paid towards the Native School at Kaiapoi, would probably amount to £1,500, a mere trifle in comparison to the amount involved in the fulfilment of the pledges made by the Government, had they been carried out in their entirety.

With reference to the claims raised by the Natives to "tenths" within the Otago Block purchased by the New Zealand Company in 1844, there is ample evidence to be obtained by all who choose to peruse the Parliamentary Papers published by the Imperial Government, and the New Zealand Company's Reports, of the intention to make these reserves on the same principle as obtained in the other settlements founded by the company.

Reference to Captain Symonds' report on the Otago purchase, dated 2nd September, 1844, will show that he abstained, at Colonel Wakefield's request, from inserting in the deed of cession any express stipulation with regard to further reserves. Allusion is also made to the subject in Colonel Wakefield's report to the secretary of the company, under date 31st August, 1844 (*vide* New Zealand Company's 17th report, p. 142), in which he states that these reserves cannot be made till the surveys are completed and selections are made.

Major Richmond, in his letter of the 23rd May, 1844, to Governor Fitzroy, also alludes to these reserves, and states his intention to appoint Captain Symonds to select them.

The 13th clause of the agreement of 1840 empowered the Imperial Government to make reservations of lands within the company's settlements for the benefit of the Natives (*vide* Lord Stanley's despatch to Governor Fitzroy, dated 18th April, 1844).

Mr. Harrington, the Secretary to the New Zealand Company, in communicating to the principal agent the amended terms of purchase for the Otago Association Block, distinctly admits on the part of the company the right of the Government to make reserves for the Natives in that block, in addition to those lands which, as they were merely excluded from the purchase, could not be considered Native reserves under the New Zealand Company's scheme. Evidence of the intention to make such reserves on the part of the founders of the settlement is also to be found in the 6th paragraph of the original prospectus of the settlement of 1845.

The original scheme of the New Edinburgh settlement composed 2,400 properties, the price of each property being fixed at £120 10s. The proportion for the Natives therefore, had the original intention been carried out to set apart "tenths," would have been 240 properties, consisting of 60 town acres, 2,400 acres of suburban land, and 12,000 acres of rural land, or 14,460 acres in all, representing a total value of £29,920; to this a further sum should be added for thirty years' interest, to be calculated on the basis of a fair rental for the land according to its relative value.

I trust it will be understood that, in advocating the cause of the Natives, I am not actuated by feelings of sentimentalism,—my only desire being to assist, as far as lies in my power, to make the several questions clear to all who may interest themselves in them; and all that is urged is that a fair and generous view of the case should be taken when the circumstances are thoroughly comprehended, more especially as these claims are purely of an equitable character, and could not be taken into a Court of law, excepting in the form of a petition of right, the promises upon which they are based not having been entered in the deeds of purchase, as full reliance at the time was placed in the honor of the Crown that they would be fulfilled to the letter.

The total population of the South and Stewart's Island, inclusive of Ruapuke, is 1,811, in the proportion of 995 males and 816 females; but if the half-castes and their descendants are added, the entire number is 2,608, viz. 1,417 males and 1,191 females. I append an amended return in place of the one forwarded under cover of my letter of the 17th instant, as the information then needed has since come to hand; also a return showing the total population, inclusive of half-castes, in each Province.

Judging from the best information obtainable on the subject, the purely aboriginal race is gradually melting away, and their place being taken by the mixed race. According to data partly

collected by Dr. Shortland in 1844, while engaged in the South with Colonel Godfrey investigating land claims, and from other sources, the aggregate Native population of the South Island at that date approximated 3,000, and the half-caste population were estimated at 100.

Assuming that the foregoing enumeration is correct, and there appears no reason to doubt it, as the numbers were confirmed by subsequent computations, it will be seen by the present census that the Native population has diminished nearly one-half in thirty years, while the mixed race during the same time has increased over sevenfold.

It is generally understood by students of ethnology that sexual unions between individuals belonging to different varieties of the human race are in general prolific; and not only so, but that their offspring are in general prolific. It is also known that in many parts of the world the mixed race are a rapidly increasing people, especially in some of the West India Islands, where it is probable they might eventually become the permanent masters of the place, were it not for the great numerical superiority of the genuine negroes.

In New Zealand we have not only the European and Maori mingling their blood, but the Maori and the half-caste, the half-caste and the half-caste, and the offspring of each of these with the offspring of the other, or with members of either of the parent stock. In all of these cases the union is usually prolific, but unions between the pure Maori are rarely so.

It is generally advanced by authorities on the subject, that it is impossible to determine how far the mixed coloured race is capable of permanency, either by the development of a fixed type or by continuous fertility until the predominant primary type reasserts its powers, by their return to that of the original white or black parent.

Through these half-bred descendants the Maori may yet continue to possess the reserves set apart for him, but he himself is fast disappearing, and may eventually disappear altogether before the advance of civilization.

This general decline is not merely confined to the New Zealanders, but is universal wherever the Polynesian race is found, owing to their utter disregard of all those social and sanitary conditions which are essential to the continuing vitality of the human race.

Writers on the causes which limit population have divided the checks to increase into two, the preventive and the positive: the first are those which limit fecundity; the second those which decrease longevity. The first diminish the number of births; the second increase the number of deaths. The positive check to population is physical evil. The preventive checks are promiscuous intercourse and abstinence from marriage.

Of the positive checks to increase that exist amongst the Natives, is the want of fecundity amongst the females in cases where they cohabit with or are married to males of their own race; another cause is living in unwholesome dwellings. The mortality caused amongst the children by improper or insufficient food is another; others are the want of sufficient food or clothing by persons of all ages. The former is one of the chief causes which operate unfavourably against a people like the Maoris, who depend principally for subsistence on that which is most easily obtained, and consequently suffer through the variations of the seasons.

One of the most wasting causes of depopulation amongst the southern tribes in former years was the predatory incursions they suffered from the northern tribes under Te Rauparaha; but nearly half a century has passed now since they were subject to these attacks, a sufficient length of time for them to have recovered from the ill effects.

The introduction of the measles and other European maladies caused a great mortality amongst the people prior to the foundation of the Colony. The introduction also of new habits amongst them by the whalers, and the adoption of new kinds of animal food, together with the use of raw spirits, and the change of clothing, are assigned as past causes of the rapid disappearance of the Native race.

In considering the preventive checks to population—promiscuous intercourse, and abstinence from marriage,—as a general rule there are scarcely any females whose fecundity is prevented or diminished by promiscuous intercourse, excepting the class of females whose only trade is prostitution, and they form so small a proportion of the whole community that the check to population occasioned by their infertility may be disregarded. The prudential checks which operate against sexual unions amongst civilized communities have no weight amongst the Natives, nor is population much retarded by the fear of wanting mere necessities, this being a matter of familiar occurrence to which they have been accustomed from their childhood.

In the absence of any system of registration of births and deaths amongst the Natives, it is impossible to calculate the average annual mortality, as many of the children die without record being kept of their decease. From the best information obtainable, the number of children born during the past six years amongst the Natives in the South, where the largest mixed population reside, was 145, and the number of deaths amongst persons of all ages was 138. Some of the deaths were caused by a type of low fever that prevailed at a few of the settlements about the latter end of last year. I have no record of what has taken place in Canterbury during the same period. In Marlborough the number of births during the time was 46, and the number of deaths 33; this shows a slight increase, which may be attributed to the presence of a mixed race.

In Nelson the number of births was 45, and the number of deaths 63; here the deaths preponderate; this is partly accounted for by the total absence of births in one district where 13 deaths occurred. In other places the majority of deaths were those of aged persons; a few were the result of accident, and one was caused by suicide.

In reviewing the whole question, the largest diminution amongst the population has taken place in the southern provinces; their former number, according to the census of 1844, was 1,900, against a present population of 944. In the northern part of the island, and the West Coast, the estimated number in 1844 was 1,100, and the present number is 867, showing a decrease of 233. The decrease in the population at this end of the island has been caused to a great extent by removals to the North. In 1860 the whole of the Ngatirahiri Tribe, formerly residing at Anakiwa, left Queen Charlotte Sound for Taranaki, and since then members of other tribes have migrated from this province. In the South th

decrease is caused entirely by deaths, attributable in a great measure to the introduction of European complaints and the evils of a transition state.

The fact cannot be disguised that the Natives are gradually passing away; and, even if no cause should arise to accelerate their decease, the rate at which they are now disappearing points to their extinction in an exceedingly brief period.

I have, &c.,

ALEXANDER MACKAY,

Commissioner.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

A.—CENSUS of the NATIVE POPULATION in the SOUTH and STEWART'S ISLAND, inclusive of RUAPUKE, JUNE 1874.

DISTRICTS.	MALES.		TOTAL MALES.	FEMALES.		TOTAL FEMALES.	TOTALS.
	Under 15.	Over 15.		Under 15.	Over 15.		
Marlborough	56	147	203	60	100	160	363
Nelson	63	156	219	63	130	193	412
Westland	13	39	52	14	26	40	92
Canterbury	83	154	237	92	105	197	434
Otago	67	184	251	47	138	185	436
Ruapuke	10	14	24	14	17	31	55
Stewart's Island	5	4	9	1	9	10	19
Totals	297	698	995	291	525	816	1,811

B.—CENSUS of NATIVE POPULATION in the SOUTH ISLAND, including HALF-CASTES, JUNE 1874.

DISTRICTS.	TOTAL POPULATION, INCLUDING HALF-CASTES.			HALF-CASTES.		
	Males.	Females.	Totals.	Males.	Females.	Totals.
Marlborough	252	200	452	49	40	89
Nelson	243	197	440	24	4	28
Westland	55	41	96	3	1	4
Canterbury	300	258	558	63	61	124
Otago, including Ruapuke and Stewart's Island	567	495	1,062	283	269	552
Totals	1,417	1,191	2,608	422	375	797

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