

worn out with hard work and exposure, their settlement presents a very uninviting and dilapidated appearance. Trusting to the gumfields and bush-work, they do not cultivate sufficient to supply their own wants, and, in consequence, at times suffer great privations from scarcity of food, and that too in the wintry wet weather, when they are the least able to bear it; hence, in the spring and early summer there are nearly always several deaths from low fever, of which there was an outbreak at Herekino and Whangape in 1883; otherwise no epidemic has been amongst them since the last census was taken, and the health of the district has been much as usual.

I feel that as a people they can have no hope of permanency unless, having cast aside their old habits and modes of life, they adopt those of their European neighbours in their entirety, as at present, mixed up with the new habits and ideas (and those not of the best) which they have acquired from us, they still retain some of the very worst of their own old customs. I allude more particularly to the treatment of the sick, their close and ill-ventilated dwellings, and also to the food they live upon. The good old habits of thrift and industry (for prior to our advent among them they were a very busy, industrious people) they have almost lost. "Taihoa" appears to be the watchword of the race, and will be so, I fear, to the last. Our only hope for the future is in the children, who, as far as possible, are being trained in the Native schools in habits of cleanliness and industry. A very large proportion of the Hokianga Maoris, owing to the exertions of the late Kereama Tawhai and others, are very staunch teetotallers, and drunkenness is no longer, as it was some years ago, the reproach of the district; but, notwithstanding this, unless they become more industrious and attentive to the laws of health than the present generation is, though the time may be distant, their extinction is certain.

No great difficulty has been experienced in obtaining these returns, many of the Natives rendering willing aid.

The area of cultivation is, of course, only an estimate, but is as nearly correct as possible, and I consider not at all under-estimated, thus showing how small a portion of the large estate they hold is utilized by them for actual cultivation, being less than a quarter of an acre per head (of course a considerable area of land is required for their stock, principally horses, to graze upon), and fully bearing out a statement made to me by the late Judge Maning, "that, if each man, woman, and child of the Maori people had five acres of good land secured to them, it would be ample, in fact more than they would ever utilize."

I have, &c.,

SPENCER VON STÜRMER,
Resident Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

No. 4.

Mr. J. H. GREENWAY, Russell, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Russell, 5th April, 1887.

I have the honour, in accordance with the instructions contained in your circular dated the 30th December last, to send you herewith the census of the Maori population in the Bay of Islands County. I have some difficulty in making a comparative return, as the county boundaries are not the same as those of the Bay of Islands District of 1881. At that time the census returns gave a population of 2,641 for the district; from this number have, however, to be deducted 985 living in Mongonui, Hokianga, Whangarei, and Hobson Counties, but included in the Bay of Islands District returns, thus leaving 1,656 as the then population of the county; the present census makes the number 1,763, an increase of 107. This apparent increase, however, I cannot think to be correct, as I am of opinion there has been no increase in the Maori population since the last census was taken. If this opinion is correct, the only solution I can give is that the last census was not so complete as the present one, which I think is, or very nearly so, as regards the numbers, sexes, ages, &c., of the people; for, although the Sub-enumerators in several instances experienced difficulty in obtaining the required information, they succeeded, the Native Church of England clergyman at Kaikohe rendering special assistance. I am unable to give the same favourable report with regard to the stock and agricultural returns: the Sub-enumerators had but slight opportunities of seeing and judging for themselves, and had to depend on the information given them. The Maoris have very hazy ideas of the acreage of their cultivations or the numbers of their cattle, most of which are in the bush and open runs, and in many instances they demurred giving any information at all, being suspicious that it was wanted by the Government for ulterior purposes, such as taxation, &c. My opinion is, both from my own knowledge and from inquiries made from people qualified to give an opinion, that the acreage of the cultivations, other than the sown grasses, and the number of the great cattle have been greatly overestimated. After seeing the totals, the Sub-enumerators concur in this opinion.

The general health of the Maoris in this county at the present is remarkably good, much better than last year, when during the spring and summer there were many cases of typhoid and low fever and deaths therefrom amongst the young people. Digging for kauri gum, which is one of their most usual occupations during the winter, is a fruitful source of disease, living as they do when at that employment without sufficient shelter or means of drying their wet clothing;