

peculiar qualifications. He should be able to speak Maori, and he should, when possible, have some knowledge of the district in which, and the Natives amongst whom, he has to work. He should also have some friends or acquaintances amongst the Natives, so that, in the event of any refusing to give him the information he requires, he can fall back upon some of his friends at the settlement to supply the desired particulars. Whenever Sub-enumerators of that stamp can be obtained the work is generally done in a satisfactory manner, and the returns furnished by them are as correct as it is possible under existing circumstances to make them. In several cases, especially for the district known as the King-country, I have made use of intelligent half-castes and Maoris as Sub-enumerators, and they have, without exception, done their work well. In some cases where they were employed I had to dispense with the ordinary printed book, as it was, through being printed in English, and for other reasons, too complicated and confusing. I therefore substituted in its place paper ruled by myself, with the headings of columns written in Maori, which, when filled up, contained all the information required, but in a less confusing form than the printed books (in English) would have been to the half-caste and Maori Sub-enumerators, who were not adepts at reading English, and who do not understand our way of locating on paper the different kinds of information required. The number of Sub-enumerators that I have employed within the ten counties intrusted to me has been twenty, consisting of 8 Europeans, 8 half-castes, and 4 Maoris.

A great deal of difficulty has been experienced by the different Sub-enumerators throughout the whole of the district—with the exception of that part inhabited by the hapus of the Ngati-maniapoto tribe—in consequence of the reluctance of many of the Natives to give the required information regarding themselves, their cultivations, and their live stock, because of an idea, real or assumed, that the Government was getting such information concerning them with the intention of, hereafter, rating either them or their lands. Another source of trouble to the Sub-enumerators has been the support that many Natives in outdistricts have lately been giving to Tawhiao and the King party. Several emissaries of the latter, and, in some cases, Tawhiao himself, having visited the settlements for the purpose of getting the inhabitants to sign a “petition,” or document, for political purposes, acknowledging their allegiance to him, and making over lands to his care. The visits of the census Sub-enumerators shortly afterwards was looked upon by those Natives as a counter-move on the part of the Government to do away with any effect that the signing of Tawhiao’s “petition” might have, which accounts for their refusing the information asked for, and in some cases going so far as to endeavour to frustrate the efforts of the Sub-enumerators to get it from other sources.

Notwithstanding these and other difficulties that have had to be contended against, I believe the population returns rendered may be looked upon as correct.

It is well known that a considerable number of Natives, not only in the census district for which I am responsible, but also belonging to other districts in the North Island, are absent from their usual places of abode, and are mostly engaged digging kauri gum at the Thames, principally on the gumfields situated between Tairua and Whangamata. I have therefore had a special return made of that locality by Mr. S. J. Edmonds, a Native interpreter and long resident of Tairua, who is well acquainted with the gumfields district, and qualified to make such a return. The total number given in his return is 565, composed of members of the following tribes, viz., Ngatiwhakaue, Urungawera, Ngatiporou, Ngatirangitihi, Ngatipikiao, Te Urewera, Ngatimaru, Ngatirangiwehi, Ngatihaua, Ngatiraukawa, Ngatimaniapoto, Te Rarawa, and Pirirakau Tribes. I believe the return supplied by him, and which took more than two weeks to make, is as correct as it is possible to make one at present.

As there are a number of Native settlements situated near to the lines dividing the West Taupo County from those of Kawhia and Waipa, I have, at the request of Major Scannell (who is the Enumerator for the West Taupo County), had the population of those settlements taken by my Sub-enumerators, but have shown them in my return as within the West Taupo County.

Although, as I have already stated, I believe the population returns may be looked upon as correct, I cannot say the same with regard to the agricultural returns and those of live stock. I believe them in many cases to be much exaggerated, especially in the cases of cattle and pigs. Had it been intended to enumerate only those cattle and pigs that were to be seen about the settlement a correct return could have been made, but, when it came to be a question of asking the Natives what numbers of cattle and pigs they had running at large, as well as those tame or hand-fed ones to be seen about the settlement, an opening was given them for the exercise of their imagination, which, I think, in many cases they took advantage of.

It is not very easy to make a comparison of the Native population at the present time with that of the census taken in 1881, in consequence of the districts being differently defined. For the purposes of the census of 1881 the returns were made up for districts, without regard to county boundaries. For the purposes of the census of this year they are taken in accordance with county boundaries. I have, however, endeavoured, as requested, to make a comparison, by taking from the last census returns the total number of Natives returned for each of those districts which come within any of the counties that I am this year responsible for, and I find that the returns in 1881 were for—