

the European labourers, and, where skilled labour is required, they are quicker to learn than are Europeans.

This marked improvement in the condition of the Maori people is owing to the presence of the Maori Council, which sits at intervals in the different settlements and imposes certain restrictions upon the Natives generally. The result is the improvement of their circumstances, and of the conditions that surround them.

Hokianga (North-western Part).

The condition of the Natives living in this district has on the whole somewhat improved during the last three years, which is due, no doubt, to the erection of certain flax and timber mills in and about the district, affording the more able of the younger Natives a considerable amount of employment.

The result of education obtained at the Native schools is beginning to make itself evident in the younger generation, who are going in for better houses and greater cleanliness about their *maraes*. The Native Council is also responsible for much improvement in their kaingas, especially during their feasts.

There appears to be an awakening among the Maoris just now, and they are beginning to go in for grassing their land and raising cattle. But the want of individualisation of land titles is a great drawback.

Hokianga (Central Part).

The Natives seemed to be very healthy indeed, practically no sickness to speak of—perhaps a little itch; but on the whole I should certainly say free from sickness. I should recommend that an ointment of some sort should be sent to the school-teachers for distribution amongst the Natives for the itch which some of them suffer from.

If there is any decrease in the Native population I should put it down to the neglect of the children from the age of two to twelve, and the careless way some of the girls are dressed—practically nothing on except a single garment.

Pigs have decreased, and cattle have been substituted in most of the settlements. On the whole I think the Maori is not the working man he used to be.

Hokianga (South).

The subdistricts through which I acted as sub-enumerator included the Settlements of Waimamaku, Waipoua, Pakanae, Te Roherohe, Koutu, and Whirinaki, and, generally speaking, the condition of the Natives since the last census was taken is much improved. The parents and children, I noticed, were all comparatively well dressed, their habitations were cleanly, their dwellings were mostly European buildings, and their financial condition seemed good. The establishment of various industries in the Waimamaku Valley has had the effect of providing employment for the Natives, who, I understand, give their employers general satisfaction. The cultivations appear to be languishing, probably the result of the potato-blight, and of the fact of other work more congenial to the rising generation being accessible. I observed a great dearth in the matter of stock. In all the parts that I visited there were practically no sheep at all; cattle have decreased, and only a very few pigs are to be found about the settlements. Working bullocks and horses have taken the place of sheep and milking cows, and the scarcity of pigs is to be accounted for by the stringent measures of the Maori Council relating thereto.

The health of the Natives I found to be excellent: no disease or epidemic has visited them for some years past. There were, however, a few isolated cases of an itching complaint known to the Natives as *hakihaki*.

Bay of Islands.

I beg to report that since I took a previous census the condition of the Maoris has most decidedly improved. In my opinion this is largely due to the work of the local Maori Council. In place of the old style of raupo whare, there are good comfortable two- and three-roomed cottages and huts; as these are all floored, it is quite evident that improved health must follow, the practice of sleeping on the ground being discontinued. The children are also much stronger owing to the improved state of affairs, and the fact of better facilities (in Native schools now being built in outlying districts) for educating them.

Although the potato-blight has caused a heavy loss to the Natives, the fact of there being a fair amount of work offering in the district should help them to tide through the winter months. This, of course, would only apply to some of them. Their chief worry is as to how they are going to provide seed-potatoes for next planting-time.

Taking all things into consideration, I have no hesitation in saying that the Maoris in the districts visited by me appeared to be in good circumstances.

Whangaroa.

Potato-plantations have in nearly every instance been destroyed by the blight, and the ground has been replanted with maize and kumaras. But kumaras are not promising well, and what with scarcity of gum and indifferent prices for same, the Maoris will be faring badly this winter—in fact, signs are already apparent. Hospitality is not as it used to be with them.