

There are over forty Natives, mostly pure Maoris, belonging to the Waikato, in this district. During the past year a party of Natives from the south visited these Maoris, professing to heal them of all diseases by means of what they called the *ringa tu*. They also went through the settlements in the county, trying to convert the Natives belonging to the district, but most of the Maoris here make use of the European doctors in case of sickness.

There seems to be much less drinking, and the Natives take every advantage of schools for their children.

Including the forty Waikato Maoris, there are not more than a hundred and fifty pure-blood Maoris out of the 968 in the census taken by us; they are fast mixing with Europeans.

There has been no serious illness amongst the Natives in this district for the past three years.

AUCKLAND-WAIKATO-TAUPO.

SIR,—

Wairoa, H.B., 26th July, 1906.

I have the honour to forward herewith a summary of the Maori census, taken during the month of April last, in the Counties of Eden, Manukau, Coromandel, Thames, Ohinemuri, Piako, Waikato, Waipa, Raglan, Kawhia, Waitomo, Awakino, East Taupo, and southern portion of West Taupo, together with Waiheke and Ponui (or Chamberlain's) Islands. As you are aware, the completion of my work has been delayed, first, by the illness of the sub-enumerator for the northern portion of West Taupo County, and then later by his returns having gone astray in transit. They have not yet turned up; but, in accordance with the instructions contained in your telegram of yesterday's date, I am now forwarding the summary so far as it can at present be completed, leaving the summary of the census taken in the northern portion of West Taupo County to be forwarded as soon as the missing returns have come to hand. I may mention that my work was begun at Taupo, and has been continued here. I would suggest that, in future, it would be desirable that the Enumerator for the district comprising the fourteen counties previously named should be stationed at some place on the Auckland-Thames-Rotorua Railway-line, so as to enable easy access for personal conference with his sub-enumerators when necessary.

Every care has been taken to insure accuracy as far as possible. Clearly marked lithographic maps on the largest scale obtainable were supplied to each sub-enumerator, so as to prevent overlapping, and full instructions were issued, as you will see by the enclosed copy of my circular letter. I also forward for your information a list of the sub-enumerators employed by me.

The total number of persons taken in my district (so far as returns are in) is 9,941, which, compared with the census taken in the same district in 1901, shows an increase of 429 persons, to which, of course, will have to be added the number of persons in the northern portion of West Taupo County when the missing returns come to hand. (Kawhia County, as it existed in 1901, has since been divided into Kawhia (minor), Awakino, and Waitomo Counties.) I fully believe that some few persons have been omitted, either owing to movements from one place to another, and so being missed, or to refusal to give information. I am glad to find that very few now refuse on the ground that they are adherents of Mahuta or Te Whiti. Some of the refusals were based upon supposed grievances, and in such cases the sub-enumerators had to do the best that they could to arrive at a fairly accurate estimate of numbers, sexes, and ages.

I beg to enclose a collection of extracts from the reports of sub-enumerators, which I think will prove interesting. The health of the Natives in my district appears to have been very good. There has, however, been a terrible failure of crops, both potatoes and maize—partly owing to the blight, and partly to summer frosts—and I am afraid that, unless arrangements to afford relief are speedily made, semi-starvation will soon cause great mortality, more especially amongst elderly people and young children. In addition to the relief of pressing want, there will be the necessity to supply seed required for next planting season. In many cases Natives will abandon their homes, and will seek work amongst Europeans—in fact, some of the sub-enumerators report that they have never known the Natives to be so scattered as they were during the taking of this census. That state of affairs will doubtless affect the attendances of children at Native schools.

Messrs. A. A. Preece, Gerring, and Marshall have drawn attention to the difficulty of getting old-age pensions, or other aid, for certain aged or afflicted Natives. If arrangements could be made to supply rations to the indigent persons brought under notice by the sub-enumerators, it would show the Natives generally that, instead of being harmed by the taking of the census, their old people might be benefited by it.

The statistics as to crops will not give an accurate idea either as to the amount of work done by the Natives in planting crops, or as to probable results. In some cases the area cultivated has been given, although no crop has been harvested, and, in other cases, owing to the failure of crops, no area of cultivation is given.

With regard to the statement made by Mr. Ihaka Hotene *re* the position of Murupara, I may state that I communicated with Colonel Roberts, S.M., on the subject. He replied that he had no map showing the position of that place, and informed me that his sub-enumerator found two women and five children there. In view of the small number concerned, I did not think it worth while to move further in the matter, although I believe that that place is really within East Taupo County.

I think it desirable to draw special attention to Mr. Gerring's report as to loss of stock at Okauia and Whakaaratamaiti, in the County of Piako, caused by the reckless way in which poison has been laid by the Government rabbitier (11 breeding-sows, 33 suckers, 14 pigs, 6 head of cattle, and 1 horse). It seems rather hard that the privations of Natives owing to blight and summer frost should be intensified by the action taken to suppress the rabbit pest, which they did not introduce into the country.

I would also draw your attention to the suggestion made by Mr. Te Nguha Huirama that the Maori census should be taken during the summer season. He was considerably delayed by snow-