

6. HAWKE'S BAY, ETC.

SIR,—

Magistrate's Office, Napier, 13th June, 1906.

I have the honour, in accordance with the instructions contained in your letter dated the 12th February last, to transmit herewith the Enumerator's summary showing the results of the census of the Maori population taken last month in the Counties of Hawke's Bay, Waipawa, Patangata, Woodville, Weber, and Wairoa.

There are no Natives in the County of Weber.

The total for the district is 4,390 persons, against 4,170 last census, taken in 1901.

The Maori population of Hawke's Bay is	1,505	as against	1,602	last census.
That of Woodville and Waipawa	479	„	395	„
That of Patangata and Weber	140	„	182	„
That of Wairoa	2,266	„	1,991	„
	<u>4,390</u>		<u>4,170</u>	

It is difficult to speak positively as to the reasons which have caused the difference in the present number from those returned in 1901.

The Counties of Hawke's Bay, Waipawa, Patangata, Woodville, and Weber contained last month 2,124 Maori persons, as against 2,179 in 1901, a decrease in the aggregate of fifty-five. The difference shown in the respective returns for the separate counties is probably due to the sub-enumerators not being familiar with the county-boundaries. Wairoa County shows an increase of 275 persons. The sub-enumerator for that county states that he was informed in several places that nobody had ever visited them before for the purpose of taking the census, to which fact the apparent increase is probably due.

I may say that I obtained as sub-enumerators the most efficient men willing to undertake the duty at the remuneration offered, and supplied them with proper plans of their districts. Their work has been checked as to localities, and compiled by a clerk accustomed to such work, and I think the result is at least as accurate as the census of the Maori population usually is.

With regard to the other matters on which you have asked information, I attach extracts from the reports of the sub-enumerators:—

Mr. P. H. Tomoana, sub-enumerator for Hawke's Bay, states,—

The general health of the Maoris in my district, I am grieved to say, is not promising. In some of the places I visited the children looked weak and consumptive, and there is a marked decrease in the population. Most of the places looked dull, and there was no sign of brightness and prosperity to be seen; but there is one thing I noticed, and that is the number of European whares that are up now. The prospect for the winter food is most depressing, owing to the destruction of the potato-crops by the blight.

Mr. Wirihana Tipene, sub-enumerator for Waipawa County, states,—

Having visited pas and places, I found private houses and meeting-houses in good order, and the Natives (with the exception of a very few old people) all in good health. I noticed in my journeying that the blight had destroyed the potato-crop in each pa.

Mr. D. Ellison, sub-enumerator for Patangata County, states,—

I found all the people well except one woman.

Mr. J. W. Down, sub-enumerator for Weber and Woodville, reports that there are no Natives in Weber, and that the only Natives at present in Woodville County are a few engaged in a burning and grass-seed-sowing contract, who have their homes in Tahoraiti, Waipawa County.

Mr. Walter Torr, who, with the assistance of Mr. Crearar, acted as sub-enumerator in Wairoa County, writes,—

I met with a good deal of opposition in some parts of the district, some of the Natives thinking that the object was to tax them in some form or another. The agricultural part of the paper caused a great deal of trouble and delay, necessitating a lot of explanation before they would give any information. However, I have much pleasure in saying that I believe the returns forwarded to you are fairly reliable. The health of the Maori just now seems very good, there being very little sickness indeed from one end of the district to the other. From information gathered, I learn that their condition was the same last year. The potato-blight is very seriously affecting the Maoris in this district; it has completely swept their crops out of existence from one end to the other, and, as they live principally on potatoes, it means that a very hard time is coming for them during the approaching winter. As will be seen by the returns submitted to you, there is a substantial increase in the Maori population here, but I do not think too much reliance can be placed on this result, as I am informed in several places that nobody had ever visited those kiangas before for the purposes of taking the census. Paitai Kaimoana, the Maori Councillor, who accompanied me during my rounds, was of great assistance to me. The Maoris seeing him and hearing him speak favourably on the work were more confident, and easy to manage. The Maoris at Waikaremoana have asked me to state in my report that they are very anxious to have the school reopened up there. Some years ago the Government built a school for them there, but owing to poor attendance it was closed. They now assure me that there are sufficient children in the district to warrant the reopening of the institution. While taking the census I counted thirty-three children fit to go to school at Waikaremoana.

I have, &c.,

HERBERT W. BRABANT, Stipendiary Magistrate.

The Under-Secretary, Department of Justice, Wellington.