

PART I.—HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL SURVEY

I. POPULATION IN RETROSPECT

A. GROWTH OF POPULATION

ORGANIZED settlement in the Dominion began in 1840, at which date New Zealand became a British colony. Before that date, however, whalers and sealers were established at various places round the coast, missionaries were operating quite extensively, and some few of the beachcomber type were living in the country. It has been estimated that there were about 1,000 Europeans living in New Zealand in 1839. No reliable figure as to the numbers of Maoris in New Zealand at this time is available, but since the various estimates range between 100,000 and 120,000, it is fairly safe to assume that there were approximately 110,000 in 1840, of whom all but 4,000 to 5,000 lived in the North Island.

For some time prior to 1840 there had been considerable agitation, particularly from missionaries in New Zealand, for the taking over of the country by Great Britain, but, as is well known, it was the decision of the New Zealand Company, under the direction of Edward Gibbon Wakefield and his colleagues, to begin organized European settlement in New Zealand which finally compelled the British Government to annex the country and provide formally for its government.

Although the New Zealand Company did not operate in the Auckland Province, the choice of this area for the seat of Government, and the trading facilities available there, did attract, from the first, considerable population in that locality. The development of Wellington, however, was a consequence of the deliberate policy of the New Zealand Company. The first ships with colonists under the company's scheme arrived in Wellington in January, 1840. Some eighteen months to two years later settlements at Nelson, in the South Island, and New Plymouth, in the North Island, were established under the ægis of the company. In 1848 a Scottish settlement organized by the Otago Association began at Dunedin. Two and a half years later the Canterbury Association sponsored the development of an English settlement in the Christchurch area.

Although the various organized settlements enumerated above provided the bulk of the immigrants during the period from 1840 to 1850, quite a large number of unassisted immigrants arrived in the colony, particularly at Auckland.

The following tables give some idea of the population trends in this period. The first table, which shows the total population from 1800 to 1850, illustrates in some measure the results of the activities of the New Zealand Company and its associates. The second table shows an estimate of the distribution of the European population at 1842 and 1851 respectively :—

Table No. 1.—Table showing Total European Population from 1800 to 1850

1800	..	..	..	..	..	<i>circa</i> 50
1815	..	..	..	..	..	<i>circa</i> 200
1839	..	..	..	..	..	1,000
1840	..	..	..	..	..	2,050
1841	..	..	..	..	..	5,000
1842	..	..	..	..	..	10,992
1843	..	..	..	..	..	11,848
1844	..	..	..	..	..	12,447
1845	..	..	..	..	..	12,774
1846	..	..	..	..	..	13,274
1847	..	..	..	..	..	14,477
1848	..	..	..	..	..	17,166
1849	..	..	..	..	..	19,543
1850	..	..	..	..	..	22,108