

Enumerator for Canterbury and Otago, "I do not consider that the returns of half-castes are in any way satisfactory. In 1896 they were returned as 871, in 1901 as 446, and this year as 818. The real fact of the matter is that, as a rule, the sub-enumerators show no discretion in separating the half-castes who are living as members of Native tribes from those who are, to all intents and purposes, living on exactly the same footing as the pakeha. In my opinion, of all the half-castes returned in this summary, not 25 per cent. can be truly said to be living as members of tribes."

It is an idea of many people that the ultimate fate of the Maori race is to become absorbed in the European. Whether any tendency is shown in this direction must be gathered from the increase or decrease in the number of half-castes. The present census shows that in the five years since last census, the number of half-castes living as Maoris has increased by 815. No valid deduction can be drawn except by taking account also of those half-castes who are living as Europeans.

The health of the Natives has been generally good. There have been occasional outbreaks of typhoid and other fevers, influenza, and kindred disorders, but there has been no epidemic of disease. In all cases of serious outbreak that have been reported, the Government has promptly sent medical assistance, and has also supplied medical comforts and suitable food, at the discretion of the medical attendant. In one or two cases where it was necessary to isolate the patients, the Government has also provided nursing assistance. There are now thirty-three medical officers in the colony subsidised from the Native Civil List, together with five "dispensers" in districts where no medical men reside, and who, though not legally qualified to practise medicine, are quite able to dispense simple remedies for minor complaints. The duties of these officers are to treat and prescribe for every Native who may visit them at their surgeries, and to visit all patients who, through age or illness, are unable to come to them. In addition, the services of the Native-school teachers are largely utilised in the same work. The Department provides these teachers with a selection of useful medicines, with simple directions as to their use, and there is every reason to believe that by their efforts much suffering is spared and many outbreaks suppressed. The good work performed by these ladies and gentlemen is deserving of notice—all the more so that it has not received due recognition in the past. The sum expended last year under the head of "Medical attendance, medicines, &c.," amounted to £1,070 1s. 5d.

During the last five years there has been a considerable change as regards the observance of sanitary laws by the Maori population of the colony. I quote from the Census Report of 1901:—

"From the reports received, it would appear that the Maoris suffer most from coughs, colds, and various forms of influenza and fever. The causes contributing to the prevalence of these complaints may be attributed principally to the unhealthy positions in which settlements of Natives are often found, their mode of life, their indifference to the insanitary condition and surroundings of their dwelling-places, and last, but not least, a polluted water-supply. As a knowledge of sanitary laws increases among the Maoris, it may be expected that these causes of disease will gradually disappear. But it is useless to expect the social habits of a people to conform to another standard all at once. While it is true that social conditions are susceptible of almost infinite modification, it is equally true that such modification can occur only after long periods of time. I have heard it said that 'It is useless to try to do anything for Maoris, as they will not do what they are told.' They are blamed for living on low-lying ground, for wearing European clothing, for allowing drainage to flow to their water-supply, and for giving unsuitable food to their children and invalids, while it is almost a crime to hand over the treatment of the sick to their *tohungas*. Such criticisms are, in a sense, quite true, but they result from a failure to realise the mental attitude of the Maori. He has had no systematic training, but has picked up European customs and ideas just as it pleased him, and just so far as it pleased him, and he has not yet been built up to the stage where progress to a higher social development becomes a purpose of life. It is unreasonable, therefore, to expect from him an immediate response to the demands of our modern civilisation, which has been evolved after centuries of progress. He must have time and opportunity, and our teaching must be measured by his capacity. We must not complain that he feeds his infants on pork and potatoes, and at the same time offer him an indigestible mental diet of nineteenth-century science."

It will be seen from the reports of the Enumerators and sub-enumerators that in this respect there has been a great advance. This is attributed largely to the instruction, example, and influence of the Chairmen and members of the several Maori Councils appointed under "The Maori Councils Act, 1900." Credit must also be given to the efforts of Dr. Pomare, Health Officer, to Dr. Buck, Medical Officer for the Wanganui District (both half-castes), and to the several Sanitary Inspectors appointed by the Councils. It is evident that the Maoris are beginning to realise that the excessive mortality amongst their children especially has been caused to a large extent by insanitary conditions prevalent in their settlements. While Maoris have in the past shown some indifference to the exhortations of European medical men, now that the matter has been taken in hand by their own leading chiefs, they may be expected to follow out more strictly the instructions given.

The diffusion of knowledge must tend to uplift the Maori. The transforming powers of education and association are at work, and must in time have their effect. The village schools are steadily improving the general standard of knowledge among the Maori people as a whole, while the higher schools turn out a number of intelligent young fellows who want only the opportunity to show the value of the training they have received. Suitable openings in the public service are limited, but the Government has displayed a sympathetic regard for deserving Maori youths wherever possible. Besides the appointment of Dr. Pomare as Native Health Officer in 1900, Dr. Buck, another young Maori who has qualified as a doctor, was last year placed in charge of the Wanganui District as Medical Officer to the Maoris.

The reports of the Enumerators and sub-enumerators attached hereto contain much of interest. One matter especially may be referred to—viz., the establishment of a line of telephone from Waioamatini to Te Araroa, a distance of twenty-seven miles, it being the intention of the Maoris who have done this work (those of the district of Waiapu) to continue the line to Whangaparaoa (Cape