

to work his own land, and provision made for him to be able to borrow Government moneys under the same conditions as the European (Advances to Settlers Act). The Natives here hold large blocks of land and cannot work them for the want of capital, and if such facilities were given them I am sure that the Maori in the near future would be a worthy settler, and not a burden to taxpayer and country. Other than this I cannot see a very bright future for this noble race of people.

#### *Putiki.*

This kainga is situated on the Right Bank of the Wanganui River, about a mile to the south of the town. There is a population of about 170. They live in good houses, which compare well with some of our pakeha residences. The people are very healthy, clean in their kaingas and habits, and by general appearances a thriving community. I notice two or three new buildings being erected of up-to-date pattern. Weraroa Kingi, the chief, gave me all information with regard to his people. I also visited the school, which is situated in the kainga, and found that the children attending (about thirty) were very tidy and energetic in their studies, for which I give Miss Bridges (their teacher) great credit. I also found that a fair portion of the young men were employed in the town in offices, and some in prominent positions. On the whole I saw nothing to indicate that the Maoris were in want, with the exception that they had to pay a rather high price for their potatoes to the pakeha, and only those who could afford to buy could have this luxury, as it is now termed.

#### *Opaea.*

Here I found the houses in the pa of European type, and the sanitary condition of the kainga very good. The Maoris also have a church erected in this pa, and during my stay I found them very strict in attending their services. A large hall is used for a dining-room, which is well laid out, in pakeha style, at meal-hours. The Natives here did not seem in want of food. I visited their *mahingas*, and found that their potatoes were only affected by the frost, and the yield on the whole was very fair. During the night the young people indulged greatly in spirituous liquors, which were brought up from Taihape by the bottle. I should like to see this stopped, and the hotel people brought to account for supplying the Natives. I only saw one person in delicate health, but this was owing mainly to old age; other than this the general health was good. I also found that the Natives had plenty of work, and worked their lands for growing grain.

#### *Rangitikei.*

In travelling from pa to pa I was very much surprised to find how the Maoris in this district are rapidly forgetting their old modes of living—packing them away on the back shelves as it were—and adopting the better ways of European living. Some one may say, "In what way are they advancing? Do you mean to say that their continual presence at an hotel bar, saturated with the intoxicating liquors of civilisation, is evidence of improvement?" No, my friend. Surely you can excuse a race that has only recently been retrieved from cannibalism for adopting in the first place the very worst customs of the pakeha. Remember that it took hundreds of years to civilise the pakeha, and some of them are not civilised yet. Common-sense will always allow that there are greater facilities for gathering bad habits than there are for obtaining good habits. But the new substantial European-built houses, well fenced in, the separate family mode of living, seems to show a deep chasm between their present way of living and their ancient superstitious ways and killing customs. Huddled together in *wharepunis* as they used to be, shutters closed, breathing filthy air, thereby ignorantly encouraging all manner of diseases; filthy jesting and very little, if anything, at all edifying; privacy, unknown; and we have the whole of the Maori ways described in that one word, "immorality." Many parts of the Old World have been crying out against the decrease of births. Why is it so? Immoral practices must have a big hand in it. My pen moves fast when I can say without exaggeration, being brought up from childhood in the Rangitikei District, that the tide has changed. Where immorality ruled the day, a change has taken place, and soon, in this part if not elsewhere, I hope, the old ways of the Maori will have been swept away only to be remembered in history.

I have said a little about the improvements: I must now say something about what is still left unimproved. I noticed in my visits to the Maori villages the lack of drains to carry away the refuse and the water. This is dangerous to health. The fact that Maoris have learned to fence in their kaingas, and thereby fence out the pigs from making puddles near the doors, is to my mind the only reason that has prevented disease from getting a hold of them.

No doubt the Government has taken very big steps to improve the Native race. The institution of the Maori Council is sufficient evidence of that. I have no hesitation in suggesting that the Maoris now want some one to see that the rules laid down for their benefit are carried out. The Maori Council and the Village Committees in this part are not doing what they ought to do. In many cases they, by abusing the rules, are more discouragement to the rest of the community than otherwise.

### 9. WAIRARAPA, ETC.

SIR,—

Magistrate's Court, Masterton, 2nd June, 1906.

I have the honour to forward herewith papers and books in connection with the taking of the Maori census in the Counties of Akitio, Eketahuna, Masterton, Castle Point, Featherston, Pahiatua, Wairarapa South, and Mauriceville, together with the reports of the sub-enumerators employed by me.