

In *Manukau* and on the northern bank of the Herekino River the blight has been very severe; all potatoes cut down with the exception of Wi Hunia's crop. He has the finest show of potato-tops in the country, and, judging from the yield of the few that have been dug, the patch will realise about 50 tons. I may mention that he dipped his seed in a certain solution, home-made, and secretly known to himself.

Awanui and Karepoonia.—Blight not so severe as in previously-mentioned settlements, but the Natives did not plant to any extent.

Pura Pura and Taipa.—Blight very severe through the potatoes. None saved; but the kumaras are looking very well.

Rangiawhia.—Natives have been very fortunate with their potato-crops, having saved them all. Blight did not exist. Wi Johnston lost a small patch, but the disease did not spread: possibly it was not blight.

Hokianga (North-western Part).

The ravages of the blight have been most disastrous to the potato-crops throughout the whole of the north-west district of Hokianga; in very few instances did the Natives get any return whatever for the seed planted during the past two years, and there is now absolutely no seed for the next year's planting.

I noticed that along the coast between the Hokianga and Whangape Harbours the blight had not been nearly so severe as further inland, a few fields coming near to maturity before being attacked, and then not so severely as to entirely destroy the crop.

In some parts of the district, notably Motuti and Whakarapa, the potato-blight has attacked also the maize, melons, and kumaras, though not to any very serious extent, apparently confining itself to the leaves only of the kumara, leaving the tubers intact.

Spraying has been tried with partial success, various decoctions being used, though not always in the most scientific manner.

Water, in which a quantity of blue-gum leaves have been boiled, is said to be the most efficacious remedy yet used. Though I made careful inquiries, I did not hear of a single instance where the potato-crop had matured without being attacked at some period of its growth by the blight.

Early and very late planting has been tried; but neither cold nor hot and dry weather has checked its destructive ravages.

Hokianga (Central Part).

Omanaia.—The blight took the potatoes soon after they had appeared above the ground. The same ground was reworked and planted with kumaras, and corn, &c., which looked well.

Waima.—The blight affected this settlement just the same as Omanaia—viz., took the potatoes off very early. The ground was reworked and planted with various crops, that look well. The noxious weed blackberry will eventually drive the Natives from this fine valley if steps are not taken to prevent the fast-spreading pest.

Taheke.—Much the same as Waima and Omanaia Settlements as regards blight. Corn and kumaras, &c., look well. This settlement does not go in for much cultivating, mostly following up gum-digging.

Otaua.—This was a great potato-growing district, but this season the whole of the potato-crop was ruined. Three-fourths of the Natives are on the Rakauwahi gumfields, which is close by.

Mangakahia.—The blight took all the potatoes early, and the Natives have not replanted any crops of any kind, or only in a small way.

Utakura.—Potato-blight very severe; potatoes all destroyed, and in some instances the kumaras have been attacked.

Hokianga South.

In regard to the ravages of the potato-blight in the district for which I acted as sub-enumerator, I have to report that in every settlement which I visited I found its effects to have been most destructive. In some cases syringing according to the prescribed methods was tried by the Natives, but proved ineffectual. So far the blight is confined to the potato and the melon plants only, and the kumara still remains intact. I might, however, state that though the blight does not apparently affect the kumara plant, yet it has been found that the tuber itself has been contaminated, in that it will not keep as it did previously, though all the usual precautions have been taken to preserve it. Whether this is due to the potato-blight or not is, of course, doubtful, yet the coincidence is significant.

During the past season the Natives of Whirinaki received assistance from the Government in the way of potato-seed, to compensate them in a measure for what they had lost in consequence of the blight. These, however, are perishing, as did their own, and though in my returns I have shown that potato-cultivations are yet in progress, I must further add that these are all more or less stricken with blight.

Bay of Islands. (South-western Part).

The blight has played havoc with the crops of potatoes belonging to the Maoris, in no single instance have I seen a crop that has escaped it. In some cases the crops were dug before properly ripe, with the result that after being stored for a short time they became useless for eating purposes. The blight also attacked the kumara, but with a few exceptions these were not injured to any great extent.