

the house for the purpose of carrying off a half-caste girl twelve years of age, as a wife for one of their party. Two of the young men succeeded in entering the house, but were immediately thrust out. The girl, for safety, had concealed herself in Mrs. William's bed-room. In our back yard a scene of general confusion arose from the shouting and wrestling, which then took place, the party being met, disarmed, and driven back by the Natives belonging to the establishment. One of my brothers, who was on the spot at the time, was hurt in the affray. The party afterwards acknowledged their error, and offered restitution. The occurrence took place on the third day after Mrs. Williams' confinement. The evil effects of such audacious behaviour taking place in a girls' school were immediately felt. A party of Kaitaia Natives, who had come up to visit their daughters then in the school, and were witnesses of the affair, the very next day removed them all (nine in number), and took them home; nor were we ever after this enabled to obtain any girls from Kaitaia, the parents always replying, that they would never sanction their daughters being exposed to such dangers, nor would they allow them to be the cause of their teachers being subjected to such annoyances. To this audacious outrage, we may justly attribute the decline and ultimate fall of the Waimate Girls' School.

In this same month, the evil example set by these young men was followed by another party, who made a similar attempt to seize a girl fourteen years of age from the school as a wife for a young man whom she disliked. She was rescued from their grasp after they had entered the house, and were in the act of carrying her off. But though successful in protecting the girl, we were unable to avert the evil consequences of such conduct: some of the elder girls were removed by their parents, and younger ones brought forward in their place. This, of course, tended to retard the progress of the School.

A third attempt was sometime afterwards made to obtain forcible possession of a girl; but I am thankful to say that in no instance did they succeed in carrying out their wicked designs: this last affair was afterwards amicably settled, and the girl respectably married.

Several of these girls having arrived at an age which exposed them to such treatment on the part of unprincipled, lawless Natives, were removed by their parents, and as soon as possible married to young men in their respective tribes. For two years our numbers were principally kept up from the Kaikohe District. But here again the same evils were felt. These girls, though mere children, were constantly receiving proposals from young men in the neighbourhood, and, when rejected, threats were held out that attempts would again be made to drag them forcibly from the house; and the parents, wishing the daughters to marry only among their own people, on hearing such threats had been made, removed them finally from the school, which greatly diminished its numbers, and nine girls only remained.

In the month of March, 1854, I was requested by the Local Committee to visit the neighbouring districts, and endeavour to persuade the Natives to return their daughters to the school; and also to give them notice, that if they refused either to return them, or send others in their place, the school would be closed at the end of the half year. This request was immediately attended to, but without success. The parents remained inflexible: they would not risk their children to the intrigues and insults of lawless young men: and the school was brought to a close by the Committee, June 30, 1854.

During the ten years we had conducted this school, more than three hundred Girls had passed under our care. From the first day of our entering on this duty, we felt the responsibility of our charge, knowing the peculiar dangers to which New Zealand Girls are constantly exposed, arising from that freedom and familiarity so general amongst the Natives. But I feel thankful to be able to add that during the whole period no case of immoral conduct was known to have taken place; nor was it ever found necessary to dismiss a Girl from the School in disgrace.

We have also the gratification of seeing many of these girls, whom we brought up, living respectably with their husbands, and shewing by their cleanliness and the attention which some of them pay to their children, that the labour and expense bestowed upon their education, has not been thrown away.

On the close of the Girls' School, I was offered the charge of a Boys' School by the Committee, to which I felt it my duty to accede, and lost no time in endeavouring to obtain scholars. The Committee limited me to the number of twenty. Twenty-two were however assembled. Those boys were kept steadily in action until dispersed for the Christmas holidays. But when we endeavoured to re-assemble them after the vacation, we were sorry to find both parents and children indifferent about their return to the school, and when the subject was pressed upon them, many refused to return their children. Ten only came forward, after much persuasion, three of whom have now left, and have not as yet been persuaded to return. This indifference is much to be deplored, and arises, I consider, on the part of the boys, in some cases, from the circumstance of their parents having no control over them. But what appears to have been the chief obstacle, and which has in some cases hindered the parents from sending their children, and the children from coming, is the system on which the school is founded. It has been our object to render the school self-supporting, as far as possible, and to accomplish that object as far as our limited means would allow we have had to plant potatoes and