

The industrial school at Motueka was closed about the middle of March, 1864, owing to the whole of the scholars having decamped; and as there seemed to be no inclination on the part of the children to return, or any intention on the part of the parents to compel their attendance, Bishop Hobhouse decided not to reopen the school until the Natives showed an inclination to appreciate the same. As no action was taken on either side, the school remained closed until after Bishop Suter's arrival, when Mr. Ronaldson, the present teacher, was appointed to take charge in May, 1868.

The closing of the school was duly reported to the Government in November, 1864.

ALEXANDER MACKAY,
Native Commissioner.

5th January, 1870.

Mr. *David Jennings*, being duly sworn, states: I have lived at Motueka twenty years. The object of my letter to the *Nelson Examiner* was to show that the experiment of teaching Maoris alone, as had been done, had been thoroughly, ably, and honestly tried, and had wholly failed. I attribute the failure to the absence of any attempt to bring up some Maori boys in company with English boys. I am quite aware that the attempt made to educate them with any of the lower class would not succeed; but I have always thought that the education of a few Maori boys with boys of a higher class, were the temptation of a higher education offered as an inducement, must to some extent succeed. I consider the Auckland College (the Bishop's) was a failure as a self-supporting institution, but I was not aware that it failed educationally. My experience is, that instances have crossed my path of real elevation of character having been given to Natives through the means of that institution. I think the feelings of the Natives are very favourable towards education, but I think they are incapable of appreciating its full value, or of any thing advanced beyond what they see to be absolutely useful; but I believe such power of appreciation would be the result of previous education.

I never heard any complaints on their part of the manner in which the land was acquired. I consider that I am on very friendly terms with the Maoris, and have been more so with many that are now dead. I am not to give a decided opinion as to their rapid decrease. I have no doubt they are on the decrease; but I attribute their decrease to the want of better education.

I remember an instance of a Maori lad, named Robert, who had been educated at the school. He afterwards lived with Major Richmond and other Europeans, and having apparently become highly civilized, yet ended by marrying and relapsing into the usual Maori habits. He took to drinking, got a complaint in the knee which required amputation, to which he would not consent, and died in consequence,—such indifference to life being a strong feature in the character of savages. I consider I have, and have had, a direct personal interest in the administration of the Wakarewa Trust, as being, in the words of the deed, a European subject of Her Majesty, and also as being the father of ten children. I applied to Bishop Hobhouse, in prosecution of such claim, on his first coming here, which he recognized very fully on principle. He told me, as I was the only person making such claim, in the present difficulties of the trust, he had the opportunity of meeting my case for the time by sending a Mr. Wilie, a trained schoolmaster in his employ, to teach my children at my house three times a week.

I do not think the Crown land granted for the institution is so valueless as is generally reported. When I first recollect it, there was the remains of a considerable bush on the bottom of the hill, which had been repeatedly burnt by the firing of the fern. I was going to apply for this land, but heard it had been granted for this object. It is a magnificent site, with land good enough to live upon. There is a very productive garden at the back of the schoolhouse.

I think that, except on the sheep slopes, the hill land in question is covered with strong fern, which I think, in its natural state, is more valuable than land which has been rendered excessively foul by bad cultivation, like the lower cultivations on the S.W. corner of the trust land. I have myself excellent grass on land originally fern land which has never been touched by a plough, and also land which has been ploughed at least six times, and cultivated with a cultivator, but is now wholly covered with sorrel, the oats and tares sowed upon it having been largely intermixed with the sorrel seed.

With respect to the appropriation of the trust fund, I never contemplated the application of these as a remuneration for clerical duty would come under the terms of a trust for educational purposes. I consider the arrangement made for paying Mr. Ronaldson as such an appropriation. I object to his going to Takaka and Wakapuaka only as an impediment to his carrying out in a proper manner the education of the children of Her Majesty's subjects of both races. I think the funds as soon as they amounted to what they now yield would have been sufficient to carry on a school which would embrace a small number of Maoris, together with a few Europeans—the Maoris being boarders and the Europeans day scholars, as the first would not have attended unless they were boarded. I think the latter would have come from any distance under three miles. I think that if a few Maori boys even had been well educated in this way, they would have had greater influence with their own class than any Europeans could have had. This is found to be the case in every other circumstance in which we come into contact with a savage race.

During the latter part of Bishop Hobhouse's time, the house was only made use of as a residence for Mr. John Greenwood, who I believe read Maori service on Sunday.

Mr. *Mackay*, re-examined: The school was closed from March, 1864, to April or May, 1868, the date when Mr. Ronaldson took charge.

Mr. *Jennings*, re-examined: I think it is a question whether the title of the Bishop of Nelson as trustee under the grant is indisputable, inasmuch as Bishop Selwyn had surrendered his patent—an act which Bishop Suter deprecated. I am afraid this is a difficulty it will require the aid of the Legislature to correct. The "successors" of the Bishop named in the grant were his successors under the patent of the Crown. I apprehend there are no such successors at present.