

*Kaipara*.—I had intended on my return to Auckland to visit the Kaipara district, having, as I reported last year, met the principal chiefs of that district in Auckland, and subsequently visited Kaipara, by arrangement with them, but was unfortunately unable to get the leading men together. A small steamer has since been placed upon the Kaipara waters, and I hoped this year to have opened the district to Native education. Your Memorandum, however, of 22nd March last, precluded my visiting a district until a school had been initiated by the Resident Magistrate or other officer, and I can therefore give no further information as regards Kaipara than is contained in my report of last year. I proceeded, therefore, from Auckland to

*Tauranga and the Bay of Plenty*, and on the day following my arrival visited the school called "Whareroa," on the opposite side of the harbour. I found twenty-one pupils present in school, of whom seventeen were Maori, two half-castes, and two Indian and Maori half-castes, between the ages of five and eighteen years. The greatest number had been thirty-nine, and the lowest twenty-one, at which number I saw it. The appearance of the children was clean and neat—their conduct orderly and respectful—their reading, spelling, writing, and writing from dictation, were only moderately good for the time the school has been in operation (two years); their knowledge of arithmetic and tables was good; geography they were only commencing. Their pronunciation of English was bad, and they had little knowledge of colloquial English. The master appears to be competent so far as his own knowledge goes, but his heart does not seem to be in his work, and unfortunately for the pupils he has acquired some knowledge of their language, in which his instruction, or rather his explanations, are given. There is no Committee such as the Native Schools Acts provide, but there is a nominated Committee of some two or three; but excepting the chief Hori Ngatae, no one has taken any interest in the school, which he says has not been visited for two years. The schoolhouse, which is surrounded by three acres of worthless land, is in the wrong place, so far as Native population and the jealousy of hapus is concerned. I was told a promise had been made that a sleeping-house should be provided for pupils coming from a distance, and that authority had been given for the expenditure, but no house had been erected. I promised to bring the subject under your notice. There is altogether an air of languor and depression about the establishment, such as I noticed at the Bay of Islands, but I think if a proper Committee were elected, with an active chairman, who would visit the school once a week, and encourage the master to keep away from Tauranga, of which he appeared somewhat too fond, to stick to his business and take a pride in his school, that a little more life might be infused, and the Natives induced to take advantage of the school, though it may be a little out of the way.

*Maketu*.—From Whareroa I went on to Maketu. I found the school in a state of collapse—shut up, indeed, as regards pupils, but still in the occupation of the late master. As I was told an inquiry had been held into his conduct, and a report made to you, I need not here allude further to the subject. I understand a new master has since been appointed.

*Matata*.—Proceeding on to Matata, I inspected the school under charge of Mr. and Mrs. Creek. I found thirty-five pupils in school, of whom thirty-one were Maori, three half-caste, and one European. Their reading, spelling, and writing from dictation, were but moderately good; writing good; pronunciation of English bad, and no attempt at colloquial English. The pupils were less cleanly in appearance, and worse clothed, than in any school which I had previously visited; and their attendance was reported to be very irregular. Yet, notwithstanding those unfavourable circumstances, I was more favourably impressed by this school than by some others of which I have been able to report more favourably. It is a lawless district, comparatively, but the Natives seem to be in earnest. The pupils come from long distances, riding, some of them, twelve miles to school; bringing food with them to last from Monday to Friday; then returning home for Saturday and Sunday, but living in great discomfort during the school days. The master and mistress also appear cheery, hopeful, and anxious to do well by the pupils. They complained of the same neglect that I heard of in every school in this district (even the late master of Maketu attributed his misfortunes to the absence of any supervision), but at Matata there seemed to be a disposition to make the best of things, instead of the worst, as I find sometimes the case. I strongly recommend compliance with the Native Schools Acts, as to Committee, school site, &c., and, if possible, the election of some European residing in the neighbourhood as Chairman of Committee. It seems the Natives have hitherto paid £40 a year towards the master's salary, but they complain this is too much for them, and, after due inquiry I promised to recommend that their future contribution should be 1s. per month per pupil, as in so many other cases.

*Ohiwa*.—The next school is that of Ohiwa, which I did not visit on my way to Opotiki, nor indeed had I heard of it until I met with Mr. Brabant, Resident Magistrate of Opotiki, who kindly accompanied me on my return, when we visited the school together. It is one of those which show the disposition towards self-help which the Natives sometimes evince when earnest about a matter. William Marsh, the well-known Rotorua chief, appears to have secured the services of a Pakeha (Mr. Avent) on his own account, and giving up to him a small Native house, a school has there been carried on since August last. I found about a dozen or more pupils, men and boys, busily at work sitting on the ground with their slates on their knees, having neither desks nor forms, and but little light, yet making good progress; better indeed as regards speaking and spelling English than in some schools having greater advantages. A subsidy of £40 a year has, I am informed by Mr. Brabant, since been given to this school, and books and other necessaries are being provided.

*Whakatane*.—The next schoolhouse is at Whakatane, where there is a large Native population. It is the cheapest and best built school which I have yet seen, the contract having been taken at £140. If a good teacher be appointed here, I have no doubt the school will be a great success.

*Opotiki*.—I found here no semblance of a Native school. There is an excellent Provincial school, attended by a large number of European children, and by one remarkably intelligent little Maori boy. It seems to have been intended for a mixed European and Native school; was opened about April last, when eight or ten Natives attended; but they fell off speedily to the one whom I have mentioned. I saw the chief Hira Te Popo in company with Mr. Brabant, and pointed out the propriety of his sending his children to the school, but he objected to the distance (a mile and a half).