

## REPORT ON THE NAVAL TRAINING SCHOOL AT KOHIMARAMA.

## Enclosure 2.

The MANAGER Naval Training School at Kohimarama, to the SECRETARY, Marine Department.

SIR,—

Naval Training School, Kohimarama, 15th May, 1880.

I have the honor to transmit, for the information of the Hon. the Minister having charge of the administration of "The Naval Training Schools Act, 1874," the following report for the nine months ending 31st March, 1880.

The health of the boys has been good, the only cases of serious illness being one of dysentery, which was removed to the District Hospital, where a cure was quickly effected, and another of acute rheumatism, supervening on chronic, since taken to the District Hospital, where it is now under treatment. Full particulars under this head will be found in the report of the Medical Officer, which is appended hereto.

Table A gives the educational state of the boys. The progress shown is not so great as in my last report. This is to be accounted for by the fact of several who have been discharged during the period to which this report refers having been long out on license, and also that there are some who appear incapable of acquiring knowledge; but in many cases the improvement has been very satisfactory.

In seamanship the progress has been fair, but with very few exceptions the boys seem to be incapable of retaining the knowledge imparted to them, being often unable to perform what had only a few days previously been taught them, and which they then appeared fully to understand, and being quite adrift when required to put into practice what they can perform with ease when under instruction in class. This difficulty will, however, I trust, be in time overcome.

The schooner which was launched last July is still, I regret to say, leaking, and not having been finally taken over from the builders, I have deemed it inadvisable to use her more than is absolutely necessary; but the term for which she was provisionally taken over will shortly expire, when I hope that the matter will be finally settled. Several attempts have been made by Messrs Sims and Brown to find the whereabouts of the leakage, but so far with only partial success.

Table C gives the quantity of clothing made and other work done in the school. With the exception of the carpenters' work, at which they only assist, the whole has been most creditably carried out by the boys.

Twenty-one boys have been received, and twenty-nine discharged, leaving fifty-six on the register on 31st March, in addition to which one boy whose time expired in June last, but who is not fitted for any regular employment, is still in the school pending a decision being arrived at touching his disposal.

Table B records the visits of clergymen and others for the purpose of imparting religious instruction and performing divine service. The whole of the boys have on several occasions been taken to Auckland in the schooner to attend at their respective churches on Sunday.

The behaviour of the boys has been generally satisfactory, but there are some very bad characters, whose example and influence have a marked effect, showing clearly the advantage that might be expected to accrue from a better system of classification. I have alluded to this in several previous reports, and I am more than ever confined in the opinion that, until a move is made in this direction, the results obtained will not be nearly so satisfactory as they would under more favourable conditions. Section 10 of the Act is the one which furnishes the largest number of boys over seventy-seven per cent. of those on the register on 31st March, having been sent under the provisions of that section, the actual number being thirty-one, of whom eight may be set down as very bad characters, five as a little deficient in intellect, six have a step-parent, two were sent here at the instance of a man who was living with their mother, she having deserted her husband, and one whose mother having deserted her husband, the father (to use the boy's own words) had got another wife; this, I think, goes far to show that the section referred to is made use of by persons who desire to be rid of the responsibility properly belonging to them. In only eleven out of the thirty-one cases here alluded to are the parents ordered to contribute towards the maintenance of their children. The total amount collected on account of maintenance to 31st March, 1880, was seven hundred and seven pounds one shilling and threepence (including a few small sums paid in advance). At the same date there was still unpaid the sum of three hundred and fifty-four pounds thirteen shillings and ninepence, only a small portion of which is likely to be recovered.

The farm and garden work still continue to give fair results; it will be necessary to break up fresh ground for potatoes this year, and material will be required for fencing it in.

Table I gives the number of boys who have been apprenticed during the period to which this report refers, and the callings to which they have been indentured. A large demand for boys for farm work continues to exist. The boys at present are, with few exceptions, desirous of going to sea, but the opportunities of sending them are not nearly as numerous as could be desired.

Table K, in consequence of the report being furnished three months earlier than heretofore, I am not able to give the particulars under this head; but from the verbal information which I occasionally obtain, I have reason to believe that the majority of those who have been apprenticed are giving satisfaction.

The cost of victualling has been nearly sixpence half-penny (6.496) per head per diem—including fuel, lights, soap, seeds for farm and garden, and for six weeks the cost of conveying the provisions from Auckland to the school.

It is very desirable that cottages should be erected for the instructors, and also that a place should be provided for the boys to play in during wet weather, and in the evenings. The recent alterations in the dormitory—viz., substituting iron framework and hammocks for the wooden bunks previously in use, has conduced greatly to the comfort of the boys, and is also a material improvement, from a sanitary point of view, the erection of a closet for night use (connected with the dormitory), would greatly aid in this respect.