

It has been found necessary to close the school at Poroti, near Whangarei; a few of the Natives of that district are very turbulent and troublesome, and it will probably not be possible to keep a school going there until these Natives get into a better frame of mind. The experiment of reopening Pakowhai proved a failure. Manaena, the chief of the village, did the best he could to induce the Natives to send their children; he even maintained several of the pupils at his own cost. The attendance, however, gradually fell off, and the school had to be closed. The school at Waihirere, Wairoa, was doing no good, and it, too, was finally closed.

NEW SCHOOLS REQUIRED.

The Mokau Natives have sent in a sort of informal petition for a school, and it is probable that they will eventually take steps to have one established in their district. Negotiations for reopening the schools at Waiapu and Kawakawa, near the East Cape, have been unsuccessful so far. The Natives of the former place appear not to see their way to give a suitable site. The obstacle is, seemingly, a semi-superstitious belief that if they allow a site to be surveyed the thin end of the wedge will have been introduced, and their lands will gradually pass into the hands of the pakeha. The Kawakawa Natives offered a suitable site, but managed to hand over to the Government a valueless piece of ground, nearly covered with shingle, in place of it. It would hardly have been wise to remove the school building to a site of this description. In consequence of these difficulties, nothing has been done in the way of providing increased school accommodation for the Waiapu District; this is to be regretted, as such accommodation is greatly needed there.

The people of Te Ore Ore, near Masterton, are asking for school buildings; they offer a good site, and have shown, by keeping up a good attendance at their subsidized school, that a properly equipped school at Te Ore Ore would be successful. Their present school building—a mere makeshift—has served its purpose, and there is no reason that I know of why these Wairarapa Natives should not get a school. The Papawai people will probably do as their neighbours have done—offer a site, and ask for school buildings. The runanga-house, now used as a schoolroom, is much better suited for school purposes than the building at Te Ore Ore; but it, too, can be considered only as a makeshift. Temporary arrangements like those adopted at these two places have one very important drawback; it is quite impossible to get thoroughly suitable teachers to remain at schools where there is no decent residence, where the school work has to be carried on under very great disadvantages, and where the remuneration for the work done (a small subsidy, supposed to be supplemented by the Natives) is necessarily low, and the portion of it that has to be collected locally is generally a “vanishing quantity.”

Petitions for new schools have been sent in from Kenana, Takahue, and Parapara, all in the Mangonui District; from Umuhika, about mid-way between Matata and Te Teko; and from Kainikini near Whangaroa Harbour. I have not been able to visit any of these districts since the petitions came in.

NATIVE SCHOOLS IN FULL OPERATION.

The schools are dealt with in groups, geographical position being the basis of classification.

Mangonui.—In this district there are now eight schools; H. W. Bishop, Esq., R.M., acts as Superintendent. The Natives here are not generally well to do, but they are, as a rule, orderly, law-abiding, and very intelligent; most of them take an encouraging interest in the education of their children. The principal drawback to the success of the schools here is the absence of many of the children during a considerable part of the year while they are engaged in digging kauri gum. Of the Mangonui schools, Peria was, on the whole, the most flourishing. It came out exceedingly well at the examination, and was, in nearly every respect, very satisfactory. The master is fortunate in having the assistance of a good Committee and a very energetic chairman. Pukepoto showed some signs of flagging, as the best of schools will occasionally, in spite of teachers' efforts; it is probable, however, that it will resume its old position next year. The master is a very enthusiastic and painstaking teacher. Kaitaia did well, and would, if a regular attendance could be secured, do even better. Awanui under its new master was flourishing. Some time will have to elapse before it can be considered certain that this school is going to do well, or before it will be possible to say that it has not been merely galvanized into activity, to subside eventually into its original torpid state. At present there is reason to be hopeful about it. Ahipara should prosper, seeing that the population is large. The school, however, has some difficulties to contend with; one of the most serious of these is that there is no large kainga near the school; the Native dwellings are scattered, and it is hard to secure concerted action by the Committee. There is, however, no insuperable obstacle in the way of success, and, should the master be able to secure the sympathy and good-will of the Natives, he will certainly have a very good school. I did not visit Te Kao, Parengarenga, because the new schoolbuildings were not completed until after my departure from the district. The school was reopened in November under favourable circumstances. Moari, Kao, promises well; the attendance is very large, and there is reason to believe that the school will be permanently successful. Heremaia, the leading Maori of the place, took great interest in the establishment of the school, and is now doing all that lies in his power to make “his” school rank among the first. The children at Te Ngaere had made very fair progress, but the Natives of the district are very apathetic.

Bay of Islands.—J. H. Greenway, Esq., of Russell, superintends the schools in this district. Waikare is languishing at present; the attendance has fallen off considerably, and the results of the examination were less satisfactory than they had been the previous year. At Paihia the number in attendance was small, but the work done was by no means bad. Ohaeawai did remarkably well at the examination, and gained more than it had lost through partial failure the previous year. There is now a good Committee at this school, and the attendance is improving. Mangakahia has fallen off slightly. A new master has been appointed, and it will probably take him sometime to get used