

It may be hoped that the experiment will prove permanently satisfactory in spite of the difficult character of the district. *Otamatea* has been unfortunate; a severe and fatal epidemic visited the district soon after the reopening. These three schools are in the Mangonui, Hokianga, and Kaipara districts respectively; in each case the reopening took place in the March quarter.

The *Mawhitiwhiti* School, in the Taranaki District, was closed towards the end of the year; lengthy experience had shown the disposition of the people of the place to be too apathetic to warrant the department's giving the school a further trial—for the present at all events.

Besides the schools spoken of above, the school at *Whakarapa* has been closed, temporarily at any rate; and the *Touwai* School, near Whangaroa, has been opened since the beginning of the year.

PROPOSALS FOR NEW SCHOOLS.

There are still many applications to be finally dealt with; of these, several are entirely new, while others have been on the books for a considerable time. The causes of delay are numerous:—

Horoera, near East Cape.—A very fair school could probably be established here, but it has hitherto been thought that the children of the settlement are sufficiently provided for elsewhere.

Motiti Island.—A visit was paid last year, and the case was found to be a good one. Since then, however, a severe and fatal epidemic has seriously reduced the number of children available.

Okohu, Pelorus Sound.—An application has been made by this settlement; the people are hardly numerous enough to maintain an ordinary school.

Oromahoe, Bay of Islands.—This place has been visited, and the case seems fairly promising. We are waiting for a survey.

Oruanui, North Taupo.—The settlement is to be visited very shortly.

Pahi, Kaipara.—Application is in the preliminary stage.

Pakau, near Waikato Heads.—The district was visited at the close of last year. Although the population is greatly scattered a school would have a fair prospect.

Parapara, Field's Track.—This place was visited last year; the number of possible pupils was too small to satisfy our Code rules.

Paravera, near Kihikihiki.—A visit was paid in November last. The population is scattered, but the case seems to be a good one.

Pariroa, near Patea, West Coast.—Visited lately; the case is fairly promising, but Natives do not show great enthusiasm. An experiment should be made when a site can be secured. It would perhaps be a good plan to remove the Mawhitiwhiti buildings to Pariroa.

Poroutawhao, near Levin.—This is a reasonably good case; the Department is awaiting additional information concerning it.

Pukerimu.—This settlement is on the Tunnel-Stratford Road. It will probably be a good situation for a school. The surrounding country is good. It is likely that the Department will open up Taumarunui before proceeding further with Pukerimu.

Ruapuke Island, near Foveaux Strait.—A building has been erected, and a teacher will be appointed shortly.

Tangoio, near Petane, Hawke's Bay.—This application refers to a settlement of apparently small importance. However, inquiries are being made.

Takahiwai, Whangarei Harbour.—The settlement will be visited shortly. The Natives appear anxious to have a school.

Tapuaeharuru, Lake Roto-iti.—This very promising case was "hung up" because a Native township was to be established at the settlement. I am glad to say that tenders will soon be called for.

Taumarunui, Upper Wanganui.—This is an important centre, or it soon will be. It ought to have a school.

Te Haroto, Napier-Taupo Road.—Tenders were called for in the earlier part of 1899. The season was unfavourable, and so tenders were too high; another attempt is being made.

Turanganui, near Martinborough.—Maori population is too small to support a school.

Waitahanui, North-east Taupo.—This settlement is to be visited very shortly.

Whakaki, Hawke's Bay.—The application is practically dormant, but Maoris will probably renew their application.

Whareponga, East Coast.—This is a case that deserves and will receive careful attention. It is to be visited about the middle of the year, or sooner.

NATIVE VILLAGE SCHOOLS AT WORK DURING 1899 OR SOME PORTION OF IT, AND EXAMINED OR INSPECTED, OR BOTH.

The basis on which the schools are grouped in this report is afforded by their geographical positions. Much information respecting the work done by individual schools, and estimates of their general efficiency as educational institutions, have been tabulated and printed in the Appendix to this Report (see Tables VI. and VII.). Additional information respecting the character and circumstances of particular schools will be found in the following paragraphs:—

The Far North.—Parengarenga, Mangonui, and Whangaroa.

Hapua (examined 25th April, 1899).—The exceedingly rough Maori buildings have now served their turn, and have been replaced by a suitable schoolhouse and residence. The methods in use are intelligent, and the teaching is interesting. The habits of copying and of spitting have not been quite got rid of. Solid examination results were obtained.