

The schools at Puketi and Makora, in Whangape Harbour, which have never been flourishing, were closed at the end of the year; the master had resigned, and the people made no sign of desiring the appointment of a successor. The school at Hicks Bay (Wharekahika), which was closed in 1895, was reopened during the year; it has a steady attendance of about 21. Six new schools were opened, two of them (Hapua and Rakaumanga) in temporary buildings, one (Ranana) in a schoolhouse removed from Rotoiti, and three (Ruatoki, Te Whaiti, and Pipiriki) in new buildings: the aggregate average attendance at these six schools is 240.

The demand for new schools is on the increase. Pamapurua has been reopened in this present year after being closed for about three years. A new school at Kokako, near Waikaremoana, was opened in February, 1897. Schools have been opened in temporary buildings at Manaia (Coromandel) and at Utakura (Hokianga). Contracts have been let for schools at Opureora (Tauranga Harbour) and at Te Kuiti (in the King-country). Tenders have been invited for new schools at Karioi (near Ruapehu) and at Corinth (Koriniti, Wanganui River); and the Public Works Department has in hand the work of removing the long-disused buildings at Te Ngaere (near Whangaroa) to a site where a school is wanted. It is intended to build at Rao Rao (Aotea) and at Nuhaka (Hawke's Bay) as soon as titles can be secured. At Waiotapu (Thermal Springs District) arrangements are being made for the survey of a site for a school. Correspondence is in progress with the Natives of several other places, who are seeking educational advantages for their children.

A school and residence are in course of erection at Taiharuru (near Whangarei Heads), and plans are being prepared for similar buildings at Kawhia. Schools have been carried on at these places for some time in temporary buildings.

The 74 schools were under the charge of 62 masters and 12 mistresses, whose salaries range between £87 and £232; and there were 62 assistants and 16 sewing-mistresses, with salaries between £5 and £50.

The expenditure on Native schools for 1896 was as follows: Teachers' salaries and allowances, £11,744 7s.; books and school requisites, £548 0s. 3d.; repairs and small works, £394 18s. 7d.; inspection, £910 18s. 1d.; boarding-schools and scholarships, £1,892 4s. 3d.; buildings, fencing, furniture, &c., £3,039 4s. 8d.; sundries, £73 0s. 2d.: total, £18,602 13s.

Fuller details, together with the Inspector's report, will be found in another paper (Native Schools, E.-2).

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

The inmates discharged from industrial schools during the year numbered 189, and the new inmates 203, so that the increase in the number on the books is 14—from 1,545 to 1,559. In Government schools the number declined during the year from 1,094 to 1,087; in private schools it rose from 451 to 472. Out of 1,559 "inmates" there were 528 who, though subject to the control of the schools, were independent of them so far as maintenance is concerned, 94 being with their friends on probation for discharge, and 434 at service. The number of inmates dependent on the schools was therefore 1,031. The number dependent at the end of 1895 was 1,023.

The dependent inmates at the end of 1896 are accounted for as follows: Residing in the schools, 556 (191 in Government schools, 365 in private schools); boarded out, 428 (including 11 from private schools); with their friends, 94 (including 24 from private schools); in hospital, 5 (including 2 from private schools); in lunatic asylum, 3 (from private schools); in blind asylum, 1 (from Government school); in refuges or similar institutions, 30 (including 2 from private school); absent without leave, 8 (from Government schools).

It is worthy of particular notice that, although the inmates of the Government schools number 1,087, only 191 (less than 18 per cent.) were actually detained in the schools. Many of the inmates have never once been on the school premises. Innocent children, nominally "sent to Burnham" by Magistrates' warrant, are really sent temporarily to a boarding-house until a suitable foster-home is found for them, and their outfit prepared; and girls com-