

The four boarding-schools for Maoris had at the end of the year 236 pupils, of whom 73 were Government scholars. There were 10 boys holding industrial scholarships apprenticed as follows:—3 to farmers, 3 to saddlers, 2 to carpenters, 1 to a blacksmith, and 1 to a printer. Scholarships for £40 a year each were enjoyed by two young men studying, one at the University College, Auckland, and the other at Canterbury College, Christchurch.

The 74 schools were under the charge of 60 masters and 14 mistresses, whose salaries range between £74 and £233; and there were 60 assistants and 14 sewing-mistresses, with salaries between £7 and £50.

The expenditure on Native schools for 1897 was as follows:—Teachers' salaries and allowances, £12,565 11s. 1d.; books and school requisites, £517 4s.; repairs and small works, £474 11s. 7d.; inspection, £885 10s. 4d.; boarding-schools and scholarships, £1,857 6s. 11d.; buildings, fencing, furniture, &c., £4,335 6s. 2d.; sundries, £107 0s. 3d.: total, £20,742 10s. 4d.

Fuller details, together with the Inspector's report, will be found in another paper (Native Schools, E.—2). Mr. Pope's report shows that the numbers of children who passed the several standards in Native schools in 1897 were as follows:—Standard I., 470; II., 339; III., 249; IV., 128; V., 23; VI., 5: total, 1,214.

No. 2.

The INSPECTOR OF NATIVE SCHOOLS to the INSPECTOR-GENERAL of SCHOOLS.

SIR,—

Wellington, 31st March, 1898.

In accordance with the terms of your standing instructions, I have the honour to lay before you my report on the general condition of the Native schools of New Zealand, and on the work done in them during the year 1897.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.

At the end of 1896 there were seventy-eight schools in full working order. In the course of 1897 four schools were opened, one was reopened, four were closed, and one was transferred to the Southland Board. During the year, therefore, or some portion of it, eighty-three schools were in operation, and at the end of the year seventy-eight schools were open—viz., seventy-four village schools (including one half-time school) and four boarding-schools. These numbers do not include the denominational schools that the Department has been asked to inspect and examine—viz., those at Matata Convent, Waerenga-a-hika, Otaki, and Putiki.

CHANGES: NEW SCHOOLS OPENED AND SCHOOLS REOPENED OR CLOSED.

After considerable delay, a school was opened at *Utakura*, Hokianga, in the March quarter of 1897. The Maoris of the district displayed much enthusiasm in the matter, and have endeavoured, by making large cultivations, to preserve their school from all risk of failure through scarcity of food for the school-children in attendance.—*Kokako*, near Lake Waikaremoana, also began work in March. It gave, at first, promise of being very successful. There were seventy-six names on the roll, and nearly this number of children were in attendance at the first inspection. But difficulties of a serious character sprang up in one way and another, and now it is quite plain that reorganization is necessary. There is, however, no reason to despair of the school.—In the June quarter a beginning was made at *Manaia*, some seven miles from Coromandel. Here there were very great difficulties to be overcome, for the school was opened before reason for its existence had been fully shown, and it was, in fact, an experimental school in a very decidedly experimental building. The master has succeeded, however, in overcoming many of the difficulties referred to, and it is hoped that the school will shortly be suitably housed. There is good reason to hope for complete success. Already the beneficial influences of the school have become perceptible in the district.—*Raorao* School, Aotea Harbour, was opened in the September quarter. It is some seven miles north of Kawhia Harbour. This is a very interesting field for Native-school operations. It was for a long time near the very heart of Maoridom, and then the man who visited it did so with his life in his hand. Before the war broke out the place was under Wesleyan influence mainly, and it is from the Wesleyan body that the Department has been able to obtain a site for the school, which has been, so far, decidedly successful; the Maoris are giving it unqualified support.

The school at *Pamapurua*, Kaitaia, Mangonui, was reopened in the March quarter. So far, the Maoris have given the master very hearty assistance, and thus he has had the opportunity of showing them that the school actually deserves such support. The opportunity has been very fully utilised.

The *Mangakahia* School was closed in June. It is rather difficult to determine whether the Maoris of the district let their school slip through their fingers because they did not care about acquiring European knowledge, or because the conditions of life in the Mangakahia Valley are too hard to allow the people to mass their children around a school centre and provide food for them. It is to be feared that the former alternative is the correct one.—The school at *Rangiahua*, near the Upper Waihou River, Hokianga, died out partly through exhaustion—a great many of the people