

School Estate.

The property attached to this institution is almost valueless for agricultural purposes, but might be made productive of a considerable annual rental if portion of the Estate was subdivided into building allotments. The Trustees of the property, however, appear averse to such a plan.

Viewing St. Stephen's as a Public Educational Institution I cannot consider it to be on a satisfactory footing. It has no definite character; it is neither a Theological College, a School, nor yet a Boarding-house, though partaking somewhat of the nature of all three. The adults, especially the females, appear wholly independent of the manager's authority.

HENRY TAYLOR,
Inspector of Native Schools.

ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL, FOR BOTH SEXES, NORTH SHORE,
AUCKLAND.

Inspected 27th March, 1863.

On the roll, 16. Present at inspection, 13, viz.: 6 males, 7 females. Of the 6 males 4 are adults, and of the 7 females 4 are adults. There are 2 half-castes (males) in the School. The three absent were at Manaia, near the Thames.

Of the sixteen reported as Scholars, and for whom the Government pay about £150 per annum, I am fully justified in stating that only three can conscientiously be regarded as *bond-fide* pupils, and of these three one is so deaf that he is incapable of benefitting by instruction, unless at a great sacrifice of time and after untiring perseverance. But as his attainments are exactly in *statu quo* since last year's inspection, I am satisfied neither time nor pains have been bestowed upon him. In proof of my assertion that thirteen are ineligible representatives of Government money, I may state that they receive little or no Education, and very little in the shape of food or clothes from the managers of the School. In the first place they live in their Native whares at a distance of a mile or more from the College, without any European supervision or any civilising influences whatever being brought to bear upon them. The nominal time devoted to instruction is from twelve to one o'clock each day. The Teacher states, "On my way to the School I call to them or open the door of their whares, and say I am going to the School." In reply to my question "Are they prompt and regular in their attendance?" I received the following answer: "If they are sleeping they will not come, if they are working they will not come, if they are smoking they will not come." It is evident, therefore, no compulsion is used or encouragement held out to induce them to attend School further than the Teacher's uninviting assertion "I am going to the School."

I again enquired of the Teacher, "Is there any regular allowance of food to these Natives residing on the School Estate?" To this question I received an evasive unsatisfactory answer, and only when further pressed I gathered from the Teacher "that but one single bag of rice had been given to them since Christmas last." The supply of clothing is still more precarious and uncertain. I consider myself, therefore, fully justified in concluding that the Natives in this Institution are not sufficiently housed, clothed, fed, or taught, and that their general training and education is thoroughly neglected; in short they lead a truly Maori life under the support of the Government and the tacit sanction of their clerical managers. I cannot but characterise the whole, in reference to the discipline, management and Education, as a "perfect farce," and the sooner it is put a stop to, the better for the interests we are seeking to advance.

Three of the pupils reside at the College, viz.: two half-caste boys, one of them giving promise of much intelligence, and the deaf man above referred to, who, if I mistake not, is rather in the capacity of a servant than a pupil. The two half-castes receive more systematic instruction than the other Native pupils who reside at a distance.

The attainments of the pupils may be summed up as follows:—

Reading.—Three can read an English Lesson-book fairly, and pronounce distinctly; three make feeble attempts at reading English monosyllables; of the remaining seven pupils some know their alphabet.

Spelling.—The spelling is very indifferent.

Arithmetic.—Five fair in Simple Multiplication; five good in Simple Addition.

Writing.—Three write in Copybooks; three submitted very fair samples of writing on Slates; the remainder forming letters on Slates.

I found it almost impossible to conduct the examination of this School so great was the absence of all discipline and order. It fully realised the description of an Irish Hedge School of former times.

There are about 400 acres of land belonging to the Estate, almost all enclosed and for the most part in a natural state. Three acres were under oats, and eight under potatoes last year, but both crops were very poor. Forty acres were being ploughed for grass; the experiment, so far as my knowledge of farming serves me, will prove a failure.

There are belonging to the School Estate ten head of horned cattle, three horses, two yearling colts, one bullock-dray, plough and harrow.