

*Kaiapoi*.—At Kaiapoi, the new building recently erected there in place of the school premises destroyed by fire in 1870, was opened on the 2nd September, 1872. The original building was erected in 1863, but from the want of sufficient funds, was not opened until April, 1866. The Natives gave twenty acres as a site, and suitable buildings were erected, at a cost of £750, including the fencing in of the land. This amount was obtained from grants made by the General and Provincial Governments, and by contributions from the Natives. The present building and master's house were erected by the Government, at a cost of £350, and are well adapted for the purpose. The land around the buildings requires fencing to protect them from cattle and horses, which might be done at a moderate cost.

The school was inspected on the 13th May, when 18 pupils were present—11 males and 7 females. The master, Mr. Reeves, was formerly in the army; and the order, regularity, and discipline which he has succeeded in establishing amongst the scholars in so short a time is highly creditable, as no one can understand, excepting those who have tried, the countless difficulties and trials which a master has to contend with in subjugating a number of untutored children to discipline and order. For the convenience of teaching, the scholars are divided into five classes. In the first class, comprising 5, they could all read very well, and their pronunciation was fair; 3 could write very well in copy-books and on slates, and 2 very fairly; in arithmetic, 2 could do simple multiplication, 1 multiplication by three figures, and 2 simple division. Second class, consisting of 2, could read and pronounce very fairly, and their writing was very neat; in arithmetic, 1 could do subtraction, and the other multiplication. Third class, 4 in number, could read very well; 3 could write very well in copy-books, and 1 fairly on a slate; in arithmetic, 3 were doing simple multiplication, and 1 multiplication by 2 figures. Fourth class, containing 3, read very fairly; 2 wrote well in copy-books, and 1 creditably on a slate. Fifth class, 4 in number, all young beginners, reading and writing letters.

The pupils in the first four classes answered questions accurately in elementary geography, and pointed out places correctly on the map. They have also a good knowledge of the first chapter of Bowden's Manual of New Zealand Geography.

The female pupils are not taught sewing as yet; and as this is a most necessary acquirement for them, I would beg to recommend that Mrs. Reeves be appointed to teach them, at a salary of £20 per annum.

After morning school was over, the scholars were drilled, and went through the exercise very creditably. It would be very advantageous if this system of training were generally adopted in the schools, for, in addition to the immediate purpose, it would be a most valuable aid in moral education, in promoting habits of obedience and order.

The school is well supplied with books and other requisites, but a cupboard is very much needed to keep things in. A set of cricketing materials and other playthings, to encourage outdoor sports, should be supplied to all the schools.

The average daily attendance for the year ended 30th June, 1873, was 17—8 males and 9 females. The hours of instruction are from 9 a.m. till noon, and from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. The health of the pupils is reported to be good, only one death having occurred since the school opened.

In conclusion, I would beg to observe that the school is methodically and intelligently conducted, and the results for the short time it has been opened are very satisfactory. This and the one at Otago Heads are the only institutions of the kind that can be pronounced at present to be in a satisfactory and progressive state.

*Wairau*.—A school was erected at the Wairau, in Marlborough, during the past year, at a cost of £150, and a master appointed at a salary of £120 per annum, but owing to the insufficient accommodation a further expenditure of £210 has been necessitated to enlarge the premises. The school was opened on the 4th March last with 13 pupils, and more are expected shortly.

At Waikawa, in Queen Charlotte Sound, there are 46 children, ranging from 1 to 15 years of age, for whom a similar provision is necessary; and at the Pelorus there are 23 children of various ages growing up without education; some of these, however, may eventually attend the Wairau School.

*Wakapuaka and Arahura*.—A school has been erected at Wakapuaka, during the past year, at a cost of £163; and one at Arahura, in Westland, at £169. The cost of both these buildings has been defrayed out of the Native Reserve Fund. Neither are yet in operation, for the want of masters.

I append returns for the information of whoever may be subsequently employed to inspect the schools, showing the result of the several examinations, and the progress made by each pupil in the several branches of education, to enable a comparison to be made on a future occasion, and to give a general idea of the educational status of each of the schools visited. More cannot be done at present until some authoritative standard and system is established for the guidance of masters and inspectors, as a mere annual inspection and report as to the number of scholars who can read and write well or indifferently, as the case may be, without record being kept of individual acquirements, must necessarily be barren of results. It would be more satisfactory also to the masters to have their worked gauged by a systematic arrangement, instead of by the present plan; and in furtherance of this view, I beg to submit for the consideration of the Government that a simple and uniform system of standards on a more modified plan, to meet the requirements of the case, than the one lately adopted by the Board of Education at Wellington,