

at roadwork, swamp-draining, or gum-digging. When Maori parents leave their settlements for any time they generally take their children with them, when I visited the school there were only eight children in the settlement. This disappointing state of matters should be regarded as merely temporary, the Natives were getting a large area of ground under cultivation, and the result of inquiries made in the district was to encourage the hope that the school will be found to be quite successful when next visited.

*Bay of Plenty West and Hot Lakes*

Mr. H. W. Brabant, R.M., is the District Superintendent. The district contains eight schools.

*Maungatapu.*—There had been a very severe fever epidemic here, which had been fatal to no fewer than twelve of the pupils. However, fifteen children were got together for the inspection. The virulence of the fever had then abated considerably, but there were still sufferers from the scourge. Under the circumstances no examination results were to be expected. A new master has been appointed to this school; I have not yet had an opportunity of seeing him at work.

*Huria.*—Twenty-four children were present at the inspection. The school had been very lately opened, and there were, as yet, no results. This school is being worked as a three-quarter-time school along with a similar one at Te Wairoa, a settlement further down the harbour. A master and a mistress take charge of these two schools. The Natives at Huria showed a pleasing amount of interest in their school.

*Te Wairoa.*—This school has not yet been visited. It was opened at the beginning of the year with an attendance of fifty. The Wairoa, Huria, and Maungatapu schools should meet the requirements of all the Natives living around Tauranga Harbour. These requirements have hitherto received insufficient attention.

*Te Awahou.*—Twenty-four children present. There has been most encouraging improvement at this school. The teachers and the Natives all appear to be doing their best to make it successful. The new buildings are, I believe, the cause of the pleasing change. Natives may perhaps have tried to do it, but they could hardly take much interest in their school while it was conducted in a hovel, and a very miserable hovel too. The examination results were satisfactory.

*Roto-iti.*—Twelve Maori boys were present at inspection. The attendance here is not nearly as good as it might be. It was originally intended that this school should supply the wants of numerous small settlements around the shores of the lake. All of these settlements, except two, have long since discontinued sending children. The reason assigned for the withdrawal is that it is not possible to feed the children while they are at the school. Roto-iti now depends on the two villages, Mourea and Taheke, for its pupils. Perhaps it would be well to remove the school to some other locality where the Natives would not mind taking a little trouble to get their children educated. The few boys that had attended regularly answered very well indeed. The master works very systematically, and produces very solid results. (The attendance has greatly improved lately.)

*Ohinemutu.*—Only fifteen children were present at inspection, although sixty-six were on the roll. This is the most provoking of all the Native schools: the populousness of the district, and the easy circumstances in which the Maoris are placed, would lead us to expect that this would be the best school in the colony, whereas, as far as results are concerned, it is far and away the worst. With sixty-six children belonging to the school, only three First Standard passes were obtained! It is hard to believe that a compulsory-attendance clause would not do good here. The state of matters was evidently not the fault of the master who is a very good and hard-working teacher. (He has since been removed to a better school, and a new teacher has taken his place.) The Maoris of Ohinemutu say that by-and-by when their land titles are all settled, and when the Natives have had longer intercourse with Europeans and have become more familiar with European ideas, their attention will be turned to education and similar matters, and that there will then no longer be reason for my annual complaints about their school. It is to be hoped that it may be so. In the meantime it is hard to help believing that, after all due weight has been given to such considerations, there is an outstanding balance of apathy and neglect that can be accounted for only by reference to the extraordinary temptations to which the Ohinemutu Natives are subjected through the peculiar circumstances of the place, and which prove to be too strong for them in spite of their being amongst the most intelligent and amiable of Maoris. It is quite certain that, if these Natives intend not to be swept away by the effects of luxury and excess, they must very soon begin to do something in the way of educating their children and of changing their own mode of life. There is one pleasing feature in connection with Ohinemutu that may be mentioned. Some of the leading men, such as Rotohiko, Kokiri, Mr Rogers, and others, are beginning to see that education is a matter to which some attention should be given.

*Lake Tarawera.*—All schools in this district are more or less depressed this year; Tarawera, amongst the others, was not entirely free from the prevailing influence. The cause of the temporary falling-off was the scarcity of food. This sort of thing is deplorable when it is considered that the Wairoa Natives earn a great deal of money every year by taking tourists to the terraces at Rotomahana. The immediate cause of the destitution was the mortality amongst the older Natives here and at Whakarewarewa, and the consequent tangis. It is a point of honour to supply all comers to these wakes with as much as they like to eat, and too often also to make them as drunk as circumstances will permit. The consequence is that a large number of deaths is always the precursor to a period of semi-starvation. This appears to have been the main cause of the falling-off in the attendance at Tarawera, as parents had had to remove to other districts in order to get enough food to keep them alive until the annual influx of tourists should again give them the means of purchasing food. Still, thirty-five children were present at inspection, and made a very good show at the examination.