

The schools at *Whangape*, *Mangaorongo*, *Rakaumanga*, and *Motukaraka*, in the Auckland District, were closed.

The following is the position with regard to the most promising applications for the establishment of new schools :—

*Rakaunui*, Kawhia.—A site has been acquired here : unforeseen difficulties having prevented the Department from carrying out the proposal to remove the *Raorao* buildings, it will be necessary to make other provision.

*Taharoa*, Kawhia.—The Maoris promised to decide upon a suitable site, but up to the end of the year they had not communicated their decision to the Department, and no further action was therefore possible. (Since the beginning of the current year, however, they have agreed upon a suitable site, and the matter is now being dealt with.) The case is a promising one.

*Waitapu*, Hokianga.—An application was made for the reopening of this school, and the request is to be acceded to

*Whangape*, Hokianga.—After a considerable delay it has been decided to provide two schools to meet the requirements of this district. One has already been opened in temporary buildings on the northern side of the harbour, and the old school buildings are to be removed to *Pawarenga* to serve the southern side.

*Te Huruhi*, Waiheke Island.—A visit paid to the place showed that there is need for a small school. No reply has yet been received to the Department's enquiry as to securing a site.

*Kawa*, Great Barrier Island.—A half-time school has been opened here by the Auckland Board of Education.

*Orauta*, near Kawakawa, Bay of Islands.—A very good case exists for the establishment of a school here, and the matter of acquiring a site is now in hand.

*Rangitahi*, near Galatea.—This case would be met by the removal of the old *Awangararanui* buildings. There is little doubt that a school is required. A site has, however, to be formally acquired before further action is possible.

*Waiohau*, Urewera.—This is a very difficult case, owing to the want of unanimity among the people and to their migratory habits. The Department's experience of Urewera tribes makes caution necessary here.

*Okere*, near Rotorua.—The investigations made do not so far show any urgency in the matter, and further inquiries are therefore to be made when an opportunity occurs.

*Ngamatea*, near Raetihi, appears from recent inquiries to be a case for an aided school. About half the children available are Europeans, and the matter is being referred to the Wanganui Board of Education.

*Waimiha*, King-country.—The Department has under consideration a proposal to open a small school in temporary buildings at this place.

No progress can be reported in the case of *Te Reinga*, Poverty Bay District. *Oruawharo* and *Arapaoa* (Kaipara district), *Waihapa* and *Taupo* (near Whangaroa), *Te Takapu* (near Rangiriri, Wai-kato), *Maungatapu* (near Tauranga), and *Waituhi* (near Gisborne) are to be further investigated as early as possible. Application has been renewed in the case of *Te Tii-Mangonui*, Bay of Islands, which is to be inquired into early this year, and preliminary steps have been taken in the case of *Pakiri*, near Frasertown.

There are many causes tending to create delay in the establishment of schools and the erection of the buildings which are not apparent to outside observers. It is not always convenient for an officer to proceed to a particular locality immediately upon receipt of an application : the case must wait until he next visits the district. The survey of the site of three or four acres is frequently delayed from a similar cause, and the formal acquisition of the site, after survey has at length been completed, takes up considerable time. There can be no doubt that the delay that has occurred in several instances has militated against the success of the school. The Department cannot, however, proceed with the erection of buildings until a clear title to the site has been obtained, and for this reason, in the cases mentioned above, recourse has been had to temporary buildings, an arrangement which, though very inconvenient to teachers and children, certainly tends to maintain the interest in the school. To avoid delay in the erection of the buildings, and the carrying out of necessary repairs, the Department has during the year engaged a foreman builder, and matters have been considerably expedited in consequence.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

*Reading*.—In this subject the work of the year is marked by a gratifying amount of improvement, and the standard of the schools has been raised considerably. In former years the readers were of a grade lower than the grade of the particular class in which they were used ; children in Standard IV, for instance, using Royal Crown Reader No. 3, and so on throughout the school. Now, as the result of improved methods, and the avoidance of too hasty promotion in the lower part of the school, the children are well able to cope with the difficulties of the books prescribed for the various standards, and in many cases the use, as tests, of reading passages previously unseen was attended with good results. It is desirable, however, that intelligent comprehension should be secured, and this is the point which now requires careful attention. There can be no intelligent comprehension of a passage which contains words meaningless to the reader, and, while it is not desirable that children should be able to give synonyms for every strange word they meet, they should be able to reproduce in their own words the ideas contained in the passage read. Another defect in the reading is the want of phrasing, absence of which results in the passage being read, not as a series of notions, but as a succession of words.

"Words have to be grouped into notions, and the various relations of these groups have to be vocally indicated. Hence the phrasing or proper grouping of the words involves a proper understanding and translation of punctuation.

There can be no good reading without frequent and sometimes long pauses. They convey an effort of spontaneity which rivets the attention of the hearer ; while unbroken fluency will never sustain