

Much praise is due to the teacher of this school for his efficient and persevering labours in communicating knowledge to the pupils under his charge; and considering the material he has had to work upon, I consider the progress made by his scholars during a period of seven months, the school having been opened in October last, as most satisfactory, and highly creditable to both teacher and scholars.

Specimens of needlework by the girls (plain and fancy sewing) were exhibited by Mrs. Nickless, and a pair of knitted stockings was presented by Remua to her father Hakaraia, who was present, and expressed great satisfaction at the result of the examination, and urged the children to persevere in their good work, and to make every effort to acquire knowledge.

On the 29th May I held an examination at Iruharama, 20 boys and 7 girls being in attendance, out of a total of 42 on the rolls, being the average number of scholars attending the school. Considerable proficiency has been attained by the children, who have been regular in their attendance, and the teacher has evidently spared no pains and trouble in trying to impart as much knowledge as practicable to the children committed to his care; and I feel bound to say that his labours have not been in vain, for the progress made is most marked, and reflects great credit upon both Mr. Scott and his pupils. I took occasion to commend both the teachers for their perseverance in conducting the affairs of the schools committed to their charge in so satisfactory a manner, for they need encouragement in the prosecution of their arduous labours in a community far removed from the society of their own countrymen, and shut out from the advantages derived by living in the towns and European districts.

I commenced the proceedings by examining the first class of boys and girls in reading, giving them Lesson 46 in Second Reader of Philips's Colonial Series. Their pronunciation was fair upon the whole, spelling good, and a general knowledge of the meaning of the words and sentences shown; and considering that the teacher knows but little Maori, and the children had never received any instruction in the English language before, the progress made is most satisfactory. The first class then came up for examination in geography—viz. on map of the world; gave divisions of land, continents, and oceans, pointing them out and naming same; ditto, zones, equator, meridians of longitude, parallels of latitude; second map, New Zealand, gave names of islands and provinces, pointing out and naming chief towns, mountains, lakes, rivers, &c., &c.; third map, Australia, colonies and chief towns named and pointed out, and boundaries given, also rivers, capes, harbours, mountains, &c.; fourth map, Europe, population, boundaries, square miles given, also countries, chief towns, seas, mountains, rivers, lakes, &c., &c., named and pointed out. First class then exhibited copybooks, in which writing was excellent; and, with second class, did sums, for most part correctly, from addition to practice: showed great acuteness in figures. The second class then produced specimens of writing, on slate and copybook, which were very good; also read in Second Reading Book: pronounced words very fairly, and spelt well, and had some knowledge of meaning. In geography, were examined in maps of New Zealand, World, and Europe, in same manner as first class, and answered upon the whole correctly. Third class then read from page 36 of Second Reading Book. Some read pretty well, others indifferently; spelling simple words well. Knew meaning of some of the words; could not make much out of sentences; not to be expected. Were examined as to geography, from Philips's Diagram, and pointed out and described rivers, lakes, islands, mountains, &c.; gave zones. Did sums in addition well, and have made good progress in multiplication table. First and second classes then repeated tables—viz., weights and measures, money tables, arithmetical signs, &c.—and showed marked proficiency. Grammar not yet attempted; instruction to be given when further knowledge obtained of English language.

The girls exhibited specimens of needlework, plain and fancy sewing, which, as far as I could judge, were fair samples of the kind. No knitting, or other fancy work, had been attempted, instruction in needlework having been first given last spring. Something more in these branches of instruction will be done next year.

Before concluding my report, I would mention the fact of Major Kemp having expressed his intention of giving a site for a High School at Putiki, to be largely endowed by himself, where a superior education can be given to both European and Maori children, being natives of New Zealand, the Maori boys to be chiefs' sons, and others who have attained to some proficiency in learning at the village schools. Such an idea of Kemp, if carried out, will be worthy of all praise, and another proof of the good intentions of that loyal chief.

The Ngatiapa and Ngarauru tribes have, I regret to say, failed as yet to secure any education for their children, a fact much to be deplored; for owing to their superior advantages, from being in a settled community, they are possessed of ample means to support schools, under the present system, where such liberal aid is afforded by the Government.

I cannot but think that a little pressure is only needed to secure their at once setting about providing schools for their children, who are growing up in ignorance and vice. Both the Whanganui establishments are well supplied with school apparatus, and afford ample accommodation for the scholars; although the teachers' apartments are far too circumscribed.

No effort has been spared by me to secure support for these two schools, which have now become permanently established; and I trust that next year I shall be able to report further progress being made in the matter of education amongst the Maori youth of Whanganui.

I have, &c.,

RICHARD WATSON WOON, R.M.,
and Chairman of District Committees.

The Under Secretary, Native Department.