

at Native schools has increased to a satisfactory extent. Full information on this point will be found in Table IV. It may be stated here, however, that, while for 1883 the number belonging to the schools at the end of the year, the strict average, and the working average for the whole year were 1,923, 1,505, and 1,583, the numbers for 1884 were 2,226, 1,733, and 1,811, showing an increase of 303, 228, and 228 respectively. It is also pleasing to learn, as we may from Table V., that, while the attendance of European and European quarter-caste children has increased by 48, and that of half-castes by 18, there were 237 more pure Maoris and Maori quarter-castes attending school at the end of 1884 than there were at the end of the previous year. In districts where the schools are well conducted, and where there is a healthy public feeling with regard to education, the children attend with surprising regularity, and parents very often make considerable sacrifices of their personal convenience in order that their children may take a good place at examination time. In many districts, even where children are allowed to act pretty much as they please, they still attend school wonderfully well if the masters can succeed in making the school-work attractive to them. On one occasion I suggested to the Matata children that, as they had been kept in long past their time on the two examination days, they ought to have a holiday the next day. The proposal was received with manifest signs of displeasure and disgust, and I was informed by the master that if an extra day's work had been proposed they would have accepted it with great contentment.

*Methods of Instruction and General Results.*—Under this head a selection of the criticisms that have been made in the course of the year on the organization, discipline, or methods of instruction in use in particular schools will be given. Seeing that copies of these reports are sent to all teachers of Native schools, it is hoped that such a selection may be of considerable use, as being a sort of chart, showing the rocks and shoals that the teacher who wishes to be thoroughly successful has to avoid. It is, of course, to be understood that all these remarks, or any considerable number of them, would not apply to any one school. At one place there is one kind of failure, at another another kind; at some places there is hardly any failure at all. But there is not a mistake amongst those mentioned that did not occur in a very glaring form in some one or more of our schools.

- (a.) The time-table does not deal with silent work.
- (b.) The time-table is simplicity itself; it really allows any work to be done at any time.
- (c.) The tone is better than it appears to be at first sight. It rather shocks one to hear the boys calling the master "Bob," though this is the Maori fashion; perhaps "Mr. ——" would be better.
- (d.) There is not enough attention paid to pronunciation: pupils are allowed to say "fi" for "five," "hikity" for "sixty," "hirring" for "shilling," and "faren" for "farthing."
- (e.) Much time is lost in explaining to individuals what might be more effectively explained to a class.
- (f.) *Geography.*—The strong point was that the lesson was interesting. The weak ones were: (a) The master did nearly all the talking, (b) far too much ground was gone over, (c) the remarks made were discursive, (d) no attempt was made to drive the information home, (e) the final tests were quite insufficient.
- (g.) *Writing.*—The faults were: (a) The children are allowed to write fast before they can write well; (b) insufficient attention is paid to letter-forms, and there is no black-board illustration.
- (h.) *Methods.*—It seems almost impossible to get some teachers to show what their methods really are. Mr. ———'s work during the inspection was an examination pure and simple. It is quite certain that the children, who answered very well, could not have been taught in this way; but after the inspection was over I knew just as much about the methods really employed in teaching them as I did before.
- (i.) The children are reading in books that are far too difficult for them; the consequence is that the reading is broken and expressionless.
- (j.) The time-table is satisfactory, except that insufficient provision is made for special lessons in English, and that too much time—two hours and a half weekly—is devoted to copy-book writing.
- (k.) The master's children are allowed much greater liberty than the other pupils are; they go in and out of school as they please.
- (l.) The drawing should be much more elementary. Children can be but little benefited by drawing horses and ships before they can make a straight line.
- (m.) The singing is very good. It is a pity, and almost a shame, that the children know nothing whatever about musical notation.
- (n.) There is a shocking want of punctuality; some of the children did not arrive till 10.45.
- (o.) *Methods.*—The defects noted here are: (a) Some of the work given to pupils is not sufficiently definite: classes were told to write out lists of the towns, mountains, and rivers of New Zealand. It is difficult to see what good this kind of work could do to the scholars. Children that made mistakes in writing were told to be more careful; the correction went no further. (b) Too many of the questions given could be answered by "Yes" or "No." (c) But little was done in the way of "building up" the children's knowledge with the aid of the information obtained by questioning.
- (p.) *Reading.*—Few attempts were made to improve the elocution. In the comprehension work, too, words were dealt with while the meaning of clauses and sentences was neglected.
- (q.) *Geography.*—The work was too purely topographical: from the beginning to the end of the lesson nothing more than the names and positions of towns, rivers, mountains, &c., was dealt with.
- (r.) A moderate amount of simultaneous reading from a very easy book or from the black-board, would do very much to improve the style of reading throughout the school.
- (s.) *Writing.*—Copy-books and slates, black-board illustration, criticism and correction; work good in the main. The chief faults in the work were: (a) Models were not very closely imitated by the pupils; (b) juniors were allowed to write rather too fast; (c) long strokes were not straight; they were also too thick; (d) more special lessons are needed.
- (t.) *English.*—The fault in a lesson in English composition was that no new ground was covered. Before pupils begin to do such an exercise, at least one precept should be laid down and illustrated, and its observance thereafter should be strictly insisted upon. In this way real progress may be secured as the result of even a single lesson.
- (u.) Defects still existing in the methods employed at this excellent school may be exemplified by reference to a mental arithmetic lesson given by the master. Nearly all the answers were given by two or three of the cleverest children, the others catching up these replies and giving them as their own. Questions should, as a rule, be given to the whole class, and the children that are to answer them should be indicated by some conventional signal. This was another fault: when an answer had been obtained it was considered that enough had been done; no attempt was made to show the class how the result had been, or could be arrived at, or to enable the whole class to answer a similar question.
- (v.) *Methods.*—The principal defect observed was that the children were not in all cases made to reproduce what they had been taught, in order to show that they had thoroughly mastered it.
- (w.) The reading was good, but there was not quite enough *reading* in it.
- (x.) *Dictation.*—This common fault was noticed: the master dictated the clauses many times instead of only once, and therefore did not make a proper demand on the children's attention.