

familiar objects are known, and the plurals of nouns, regular or irregular, are correctly given. The pronunciation of all these words is nearly faultless.

In schools that are well advanced in arithmetic the addition tables are correctly known; there is no hesitation in answering questions in these tables, and there are no traces of finger-counting. Pupils are very familiar with the succession of numbers 1 to 100. Easy numeration and easy addition sums are correctly done. Throughout there is great readiness.

Boys and girls hem very neatly.

In at least two of our schools this high standard of work has recently been completely reached in all subjects. These are Ranana, near Lake Rotorua, and Koriniti, on the Wanganui River. A good approximation to it was also made at most of the schools mentioned above as having gained over 80 per cent. at examination, and by some of those that made over 70 per cent.

The First Standard work has been made the subject of special remark because it is in fact the most important. It has been noticed that when children make really sound and good First Standard passes they seldom experience any great difficulty in passing the other standards afterwards. In Standard II. some schools have made great progress in the matter of fluency in reading, in copy-book writing, elementary geography, and mental arithmetic. In Standard III. great fluency in reading and strength in grasping the meaning of any part of the Native School Reader have been found; also, correct dictation work from the same book; and good translation of English sentences. In two or three cases *viva voce* arithmetic has been found to be thoroughly strong. In Standard IV. reading has been quite fluent, pronunciation correct, and health knowledge extensive. Dictation work has been found very strong. Physical geography has been good, and *viva voce* arithmetic excellent.

It has, however, not very often been the case in the higher classes that very many such strong points have been found co-existent in one school. It is hoped that the statements here made as to what can be done with children of Native race in fairly favourable circumstances will, as was said above, have a stimulating effect on those of our teachers who, for want of knowing the actual possibilities, are inclined to be satisfied with a very moderate amount of proficiency in their pupils. It will have been noticed that great stress is laid on the importance of fluency in reading. The reason of this is that experience has made it plain that until children can read with very considerable fluency no solid progress in English work has been made. It is quite true that children who read with hesitation and frequent mispronunciation may do very fair book arithmetic and may know a great deal of geography; but, with faulty powers of expression and defective utterance, they are generally unable to show what they know of these subjects. It is only by some accident, aided by untiring patience on the part of the examiner, that what these unfortunate scholars know can ever be brought to light at examination time. Other reasons—some of them quite obvious—might be adduced for putting fluent reading in the very forefront of Native school requirements.

(7.) *Extension among the Natives of Desire for Native Schools.*

One of the most remarkable signs of change in the attitude of the Maoris towards European civilisation is to be found in the extension of the area of country in which the Native inhabitants now desire schools. A glance at the list of "New Schools opened" and of "Proposals for New Schools," given in the earlier portion of this report, will show that schools have been built, or, at least, asked for, in places that were practically inaccessible a few years ago. One of the most cheering features of this change is to be found in the fact that the soreness caused by the Maori wars of "the sixties" is being gradually removed in most districts. The fact that a large school has been established at Rakaumanga, which is close to Waihi, the settlement of Mahuta, son and successor of Tawhiao, is significant. It seems to show that much of the prejudice and ill-will naturally engendered by the old trouble is being mitigated, and it gives ground for hoping that in a few years all misunderstandings depending on the Kingite wars will have quite passed away. Another very significant fact is to be found in the receipt of an application for a school at Parawera. For a long time this settlement was the residence of Tawhiao. It is some seven miles from Kihikihi, and not very far from Orakau, where Rewi Maniapoto made his last stand against our overwhelming force. The opposition of the Urewera people to the establishment of schools has long been ended, and another Urewera school—at Waimana—is about to be opened. The only extensive district now closed to us is that connected with Parihaka. The people of this district, except a few who are more enlightened, seem determined to act in accordance with our old proverb, "To cut off their noses in order to do despite to their faces," and sturdily refuse to accept any part of the civilisation that would rescue them from certain destruction if they could make up their minds to embrace it, or that will slowly abolish them if they persist in withstanding it. There is no middle path for them. *Hakas, poi* dances, and feasting never yet saved the souls alive of any tribe or nation, and never will.

(8.) *The Death of the late Rev. W. J. Habens.*

This report may very fitly conclude with a short *in memoriam* reference to the death of our late respected Secretary and Inspector-General of Schools, the Rev. W. J. Habens, B.A. Mr. Habens was a very active and faithful friend of the Maori people; he never considered time wasted that was spent in connection with Native school affairs. Although Mr. Habens never had an opportunity of learning to speak Maori fluently, he had a very surprising grasp of the genius of the language, and was often able to explain difficult points that had caused experienced Maori linguists much trouble and perplexity. He was for several years President of the Polynesian Society. With quite characteristic thoroughness Mr. Habens always made it a point to reach the very bottom of all business that concerned the Maoris, and he appeared to take an independent and peculiar interest in it. Hence it came about that all Maoris who visited the office and had interviews with the *tino Kai-tiroiro* went away deeply impressed with his power of understanding their concerns, and feeling grateful for his kindness and sympathy. To say that the acumen, the foresight, and the wisdom of Mr. Habens were almost invaluable to Native schools and to all the officers connected with them is to put the case quite soberly. The memory of our departed chief will be, and ought to be, green for all of us for many a day, and especially for my colleague Mr. H. B. Kirk, M.A., and myself, seeing that we saw most of him and knew him best.

I have, &c.,

JAMES H. POPE.