

predominantly English. No longer can the Native pa provide for all the requirements of its growing youth, and opportunities must be sought farther afield. It is therefore all the more important that they should be equipped with the language to such a degree that they are able to compete on practically level terms with the pakeha. In most schools the children definitely show ability to speak the English language, but the written side shows greater variation in quality. In recent years we have stressed, especially in Forms I and II, the necessity for a sound training in business English. Yet even here there is the necessity for attention to fundamentals—sound sentence structure, extensive vocabularies, correct grammar, and correct spelling. The foundations of these need to be well laid in the lower standards. In Standards 1 and 2 too much should not be attempted in any one effort, and considerable assistance is needed by the young Maori pupil if he is to gain a complete understanding of the essentials I have mentioned. Drills are needed to correct typical Maori errors, and these should be based on the mistakes actually noted both in oral and written English in the class-room.

This work should be supplemented by wider reading, and an effort is being made to build up good libraries in our schools. Books should be easy to read and attractive in content so that when the child has finished one book he wants immediately to proceed with another. In building up the libraries we have tried not only to provide interesting, easy, and good literature, but also informative books useful in the teaching of such subjects as history, geography, and elementary science.

Spelling, too, requires more thoughtful preparation. Several well-known lists are available, but again they have not been prepared specially for the Maori child. That is essential in any list used in a Native school. Too often we find words given in spelling tests that could conveniently be left till a later stage, while the written tests reveal errors in the spelling of comparatively simple words. These are the words the child needs to use, and they should be thoroughly known.

In art and handwork the Native schools have a dual aim—to revive an interest and skill in the old Maori crafts and to give training in the pakeha crafts. In the latter case the aim is to give the Maori boys an incentive to enter the skilled trades, for which many have the aptitude. About half our Native schools have been equipped with woodwork tools, and every effort is made to see that instruction is practical in nature, having some relation to the needs of the children or of the home. The aim must be to develop initiative and resource, by teaching them to plan things for themselves and carry them to a successful conclusion. We have also stressed the fact that the completed article should exhibit a finish that will give complete satisfaction to its maker.

With regard to the old Maori crafts, these have had a stimulus in 1946 by the appointment of specialist instructors in the North Auckland district. Mr. and Mrs. Toka were appointed to the staff of the Kaikohe Native School and were asked to give instruction in a group of 10 schools round Kaikohe, visiting them in rotation once a fortnight and spending a day at each school. In most schools the results were very gratifying. The older Maori people as well as the younger ones, showed a keen interest in the revival of their old crafts, songs, and dances. An annual competition for pois, hakas, and action songs was inaugurated at Kaikohe last year, and as a result of the work of Mr. and Mrs. Toka there was an immense improvement in the standard of work at the display this year. In one or two schools there was, unfortunately, not the degree of co-operation that we should desire, and in those particular schools little progress was made.

The Department also employed Miss Tuini Ngawai at Ruatoria and neighbouring schools. She did excellent work in improving the singing of action songs in that area.

Physical education continues to receive its proper share of attention in Native schools. Last year a Maori girl, trained as a specialist in physical education, took up duties in the East Coast area.

During the year several educational tours were organized in different Native schools. From all reports these tours were complete successes and afforded the children an opportunity of seeing many things which are, in the ordinary way, completely outside their experience.