

This short account, then, of our available means for giving the Maori pupils at Government schools and other institutions more or less education when they have finished their primary work may probably serve as a kind of inventory of all our possessions of this particular class. It is probable that for a considerable time to come this provision will remain much as it is, but with capacity for expansion quantitatively, and having always two distinct qualitative tendencies, corresponding, perhaps, in some degree to those found in the classical and modern sides of an English grammar school, but with the advantage in the case last referred to, that all the work must be done in the language that has to be thoroughly mastered, and mastered mainly by being so used.

It is nearly always worth while to draw attention to this important point when occasion offers, just because its very obviousness is a constant cause of its being overlooked altogether. One curious consequence of this fact is that if a European and a Maori boy pass the matriculation examination, each gaining the same number of marks in each subject, and if this happens to be a fair index of their respective mental capacities, the Maori must necessarily be the more highly educated of the two.

II.

If we are now prepared to admit that the Department's scheme for giving secondary education to young Maoris really must contain valuable elements, and if even this sketchy statement makes it plain that a very great deal is actually done in the way of giving secondary education to young Maoris, both boys and girls, it will also be plain that there still remain on hand many problems that deserve and are capable of receiving further treatment, and greatly require it. Three of these have been selected for brief discussion on the present occasion; the many others that have at the least been recognised as existing and important must stand over until more experience has been gained of the circumstances to which they owe their origin and peculiar features.

The following are the questions now to be dealt with: I. Are our secondary school time-tables quite thoroughly adapted to the conditions and interests of the people whom they are intended to benefit, and, if not, how may these documents be so amended or altered that all or most of the advantages aimed at may be secured? II. Supposing that Maori education is all that it should be, or that it would be so if our time-tables received important suitable modifications, it may be quite properly asked, What further work or preparation for work, or, generally, what means would be most likely to give our educated young Maoris the very best chance of leading good and useful lives? III. The third problem may be stated thus: Is it desirable that young Maoris in general should be encouraged to look forward to a university career as the natural sequence to what they may have already done? More particularly: Is it expedient to encourage all boys who are considered strong enough to take up matriculation work to enter upon that work with the full expectation that if they succeed in passing the examination they will receive university scholarships from the Government?

I. With regard to our secondary time-tables, then, it may be said that the following considerations are, perhaps, worthy of some attention: The period during which the term "educated man" has meant, in the main, a man of letters is rapidly passing by; and it may be safely believed that institutions neglecting the thorough training of each and every useful human power will soon begin to find themselves more or less out of date, no matter how sound and good their literary or other work may be. The educated man of the future will probably have to wield far more instruments than the pen, the rifle, and the cricket-ball. It may be remarked, too, that while it is well that scholastic institutions should be strong at games, and many other kinds of athletic exercises also, and that proficiency in these could, to some small extent at all events, serve as a substitute for ability to use the saw, the plane, the hammer, the compass, and the square, it may, perhaps, be taken for granted that the most athletically minded of men would hardly maintain that cricket, or even football, can be justly considered a means for giving the thorough training of hand and eye which is going to be before very long a necessary part of an educated man's equipment. It would be very natural for an institution like Te Aute, for instance, to state that as it is the only establishment in New Zealand specially set apart for the preparation of Maori boys for university work, it must do this work at all hazards. This statement happens to be true; but the admission of its truth by no means carries with it the further admission that the educated man of the immediate future is to be a one-sided literary specialist, a man of books, and not of varied activities with the kind of culture properly pertaining to each; still less does the admission referred to entitle one to say that five hours a day should be devoted regularly to purely mental work. Probably, if the opinions of "the masters who know" could be taken, there would be found a large majority in favour of the view that four hours' mental work daily, in a school with an adequate staff, a good time-table, and a first-class tone—all of which, to the best of my belief, are to be found at Te Aute, for instance—would be quite sufficient for any boy, European or Maori, to say nothing of any master. One might venture to go further than this in the same general direction, and say that any extension of time beyond four hours per diem for hard continuous mental work must certainly be bad for both pupils and teachers.

Teachers whose life experience of teaching and being taught extends over more than, say, sixty years know quite well that there has in that time been a gradual shortening of the hours of work, and much more than corresponding increase of efficiency. These two facts are, on the whole, beyond question. The long experience of the present writer very possibly gives him a kind of right to have an opinion on the subject, and he holds that the limits of decrease of school-time for mental subjects, and simultaneous increase of efficiency of teachers, have not yet been reached; and he would venture to prophesy, if prophesying were one of his functions, that within ten years the limits for such hard mental work will be, for boy and man, about four hours a day—less