

Further, the opportunity of correlating the reading and English lessons is frequently omitted. If the pupils were regularly questioned on the subject-matter of their reading lessons they would acquire some of the language of the lessons. What matter if they should appear to know the reading-book by heart, provided that they can read other books, and that they fully understand what they are saying? I believe that this would prove a very great help to them in the acquisition of an English vocabulary, besides offering the variety in subjects which is necessary to the successful teaching of composition.

I think, too, that the attempt should be made more frequently to get from the children, orally, a connected narrative, the end of the sentences being marked by the falling cadence of the voice.

Punctuation can be taught best during the blackboard lessons in composition; but the teacher must not expect to get proper punctuation in the composition unless he has due regard to the punctuation in the reading and transcription lessons, which afford further means of teaching it.

*Arithmetic.*—In this subject I think that a considerable improvement is noticeable. The preparatory classes in most schools are well taught, and the children can perform the four operations with the numbers up to 20 very well indeed. The work has been taken orally, even in Standard I. The practice of giving children in these classes long sums in addition before they understand the composition of even the first ten numbers cannot be too strongly condemned. I have been frequently told that children can do addition sums or say the multiplication table, and yet find that they are unable to answer orally very simple questions in arithmetic, and even—only in a very few schools—make surreptitious use of their fingers.

It is pleasing to note the alertness of the children in many schools during an oral lesson in arithmetic, and to receive their prompt answers almost anticipating the questions. The practice this kind of work affords in English is also very useful, and has contributed largely to raising the standard in oral English in these classes. The effect is also apparent in the case of the higher classes, where the pupils show more ability to deal with problems than they did formerly.

*Geography.*—In the examination in this subject the Inspector was guided not so much by what the Native Schools Code of 1897 laid down, but by the teacher's statement of the geography taught. It was found in very many schools that the teachers had already adopted the new scheme of work, and had made good progress in it. One finds, however, that there are still schools in which the points of the compass are determined by the right or left hand, and the geography in these schools, as might be expected, was of very poor quality. The scheme of geography or nature study set forth in the proposed new syllabus, while it may be somewhat pretentious and may require modification, indicates the lines on which the teaching of geography should proceed.

*Sewing.*—The Department has, I think, every reason to be well satisfied with the efficient instruction in sewing given in the schools. The records of successes of all the schools at the late Exhibition have not been completely ascertained, but from those we have it is evident that the work was considered by the judges to be of very high merit. At several of the schools the pupils were awarded medals, *Whangape* School obtaining no less than six, including two gold medals won in competition against all comers.

In some of the largest schools the girls are taught the use of the sewing-machine, and lessons are given in plain dressmaking and in the cutting-out and making of garments suitable for children. At *Te Kerepehi* Native School the adult women have received instruction in dressmaking with very good results. The practical application of the knowledge of the various stitches to simple articles of dress has become almost general in the schools, and it is no uncommon sight to see children attending school dressed in clothes of their own making. It is not intended in the future that boys shall be expected to take sewing, though, of course, there is no objection to their doing so if they wish.

*Extra Subjects—Singing, Drawing, Drill.*—Of these subjects, drawing continues to be weak, and this is not due so much to the inability of the Maori child to draw as to the want of systematic teaching. In the new syllabus drawing will be introduced in the lowest classes in connection with handwork, and a graduated scheme arranged. From what is presented at examination one cannot conclude that there has been regular teaching, nor is the work characterized by the neatness which should accompany it. I was very much struck with the well-designed system used at *Karioi* School, where the infant-classes were doing capital work, and with the excellent drawing from nature done at *Te Kerepehi*.

*Drill.* The drill consists for the most part of physical exercises, though in two schools there are cadet companies which take military drill. At many schools children are assembled for drill ten minutes or even half an hour before 10 o'clock, and, though I hardly like to recommend that this should be made general, I have no doubt whatever of its being a very great boon to the children. In a few schools the lack of precision and the need of prompting lead one to conclude that drill is not taken regularly, and occasionally a teacher upon being transferred to another school wonders to what extent this important subject has been treated by his predecessor. As an aid to bodily health, as a means of stimulating the circulation and making the children warm on cold mornings, as well as an aid to order and discipline, drill cannot be valued too highly, and the teacher who neglects it will find that he must needs make up the deficiency in other ways, so that he saves no time by his neglect. While on the subject of drill I should like to remark that in a few schools where, as is to be expected, the drill is very poor, the children troop in and out of school without any semblance of order. They should be trained to regard the stroke of the bell as the signal that play is to cease and school-work to begin. They should form into line without any delay, and, upon the word, march into school in an orderly manner. A similar method should be followed upon their dismissal. Of course, these remarks apply, I am glad to say, to very few schools indeed. It is a real pleasure to watch the precise and vigorous movements exhibited in the drill at the schools where the subject is treated as it deserves.