

Singing: This subject continues to be well taught, and in many schools is a very enjoyable feature of the work. In schools where the children have been asked to sing at sight songs written for the purpose on the blackboard very good results have been achieved. Indeed, the ability to read tonic sol-fa notation and to sing at sight from it is not lost after the children have left school. At the request of the people, I spent an evening recently assisting at a choir practice. I was astonished at the skill shown by the young men and women in reading at sight, as well as delighted with the harmony of their voices. Those teachers who neglect to give their pupils a thorough training in sol-fa notation make a great mistake by doing so. No material advantage beyond the mere acquisition of a new tune is afforded to the children who are taught their songs by ear. They certainly acquire no facility in reading music, and a request to sing even an easy song at sight would prove their undoing. Further, the teacher has always to start from "scratch," as it were. For the future we have decided that no singing will be regarded as deserving of full marks unless the children have been taught the songs from either the sol-fa or the old notation, and are relatively proficient in either method.

Handwork.—This includes various elementary manual occupations—*e.g.*, paper folding and mounting, modelling in cardboard and in plasticine, and woodwork. During the year elementary practical agriculture has been added to the list, and there is already quite a number of school gardens to be found among the schools. I have referred elsewhere to the practical training given in connection with the teaching of sewing. This work is of a very useful kind, and is much appreciated by the girls and their parents. The number of schools at which instruction is given in domestic duties—plain cooking and laundry-work—shows a further increase this year, and a very useful kind of education is being given at an exceedingly small cost. During the year a workshop has been established at *Omaio*, the Maoris rendering material assistance. Others are in contemplation at *Ruakokore* and *Waitahanui*, though the prospects of success in the former case seem to me doubtful. These workshops are on the whole keenly appreciated by the people. The articles made during the year may be purchased at cost price by the pupils or their parents, and there is usually a good demand. At *Pukepoto* School, where the workshop is a great success, it was amusing to see how eager the parents were to secure the useful articles which their boys had made. Indeed, in this school, as in several others, the demand exceeds the supply. It is thus evident that the Department is doing all that it can reasonably be expected to do in the direction of giving practical training to Maori children: technical instruction in the proper sense of the term is to a large extent impracticable in the case of village schools. It must be borne in mind also that teachers in Native schools are placed at considerable disadvantage in regard to facilities for acquiring knowledge of the methods and principles of manual and technical instruction. Except in the case of two or three schools in the South Island, our teachers are quite unable to attend teachers' classes of instruction held in the various centres, and hence are thrown entirely on their own resources. Under these circumstances one cannot help feeling that the amount of instruction in the more important branches of practical training is very creditable indeed, and compares very favourably with what is done in any education district with an equal number of schools. In view of the fact that it is deemed advisable to pay even greater attention to this side of Native-school work, I think the Department should consider the question of appointing an officer to take charge of it, and especially to organize and direct the course of practical agriculture arranged for the schools.

HIGHER EDUCATION.

No secondary schools specially for Maori children have been established by the Government, nor, indeed, does there seem any necessity for such a step. The Department secures secondary education for Maoris by offering free places or scholarships tenable at various institutions controlled by religious bodies—*viz.*, Te Aute College, Hawke's Bay; St. Stephen's Boys' School, Auckland; Queen Victoria School for Girls, Auckland; Hukarere Girls' School, Napier; St. Joseph's Convent School, Napier; and Turakina Girls' School, Wanganui. The regulations in connection with these scholarships have been recently revised, and a syllabus of instruction has been arranged for Government scholars attending these schools. The effect of this is to give recognition to the practice that has been gradually evolved of following the lines of the public-schools syllabus, adapting it to the special needs of Maori boys and girls, and requiring in addition definite instruction in one or more branches of manual training. This plan has been in vogue for some years in all the above-named schools, with the exception of Te Aute College. The establishment of a workshop and the reduction of the amount of time devoted to teaching Latin are notable changes in the curriculum of this institution, whose value will, I feel sure, be enhanced thereby. At some of the secondary schools we find preparatory classes composed of children that have not passed Standard I in any school. Of course, in those schools which are established as trust schools for the education of the Maori children of the district it seems difficult, or perhaps impossible, to refuse such children. Nor can admission be reasonably refused to children coming from places where there is no school, and whose parents may be willing to pay for them. But there is a danger of these schools being used as merely class schools by parents, who seek admission for their children to one of these institutions though within easy reach of either a public school or a Native school. As far as is possible these schools should be continuation schools, and the authorities should not have the teachers' time occupied with one or two preparatory children, who can get similar but more thorough instruction in the ordinary village school.

Many complaints have been made by parents on account of the excessive demands made by the school authorities in respect to clothing, outfit, &c., and during the inspection visits some inquiries were made into the matter. The results of these inquiries show that the extravagance arises in the main from the boys and girls themselves. But I cannot help thinking that their tendencies in this direction should be forcibly checked by the school authorities, and that nothing but a simple