

errors, like some of those in spelling, should never be allowed to reach the higher standards. In the excellent scheme in English language drawn up by the headmaster of the Whakarewarewa School provision is made for dealing with these errors in composition in the classes in which they have been found from the experience of several years to be of most frequent occurrence, with the result that they are effectively disposed of in those classes.

*Arithmetic.*—We regard the arithmetic of the lower classes as being very satisfactory indeed, and desire to express our appreciation of the efforts of the assistant teachers who have done so much to make this subject efficient. It must be remembered that from the nature of infant-class teaching the lessons in arithmetic are of comparatively short duration, and involve constant effort on the part of the teacher. The children are taught more frequently and more vigorously. The results obtained go to show that similarly good effects would be produced in the higher classes if this course were adopted there. In the higher classes we consider at present that there is too much time devoted to arithmetic, and, considering the results, too little teaching is given, the pupils spending most of their time in working examples. The result is that, while they are able to work mechanical examples with fair accuracy and speed, their ability to work problems is as a rule far from being high. Mental and oral arithmetic, after all, constitute the greater part of the arithmetic required in every-day life, and should therefore receive more attention than the mere mechanical processes. We have often met with Maoris who, so far as we know, have not attended school at all, and yet are able to make difficult calculations mentally with surprising readiness.

Another point upon which we think something should be said is the need that exists in many schools for making the arithmetic as realistic as possible. It is true that this is done to a very large extent in the lower classes, the infants learning by the aid of actual objects which they handle for themselves, but there is generally far too little recourse to concrete illustration in the standard classes. With very simple apparatus—such as rules marked off into inches, &c.; cords knotted at distances of one foot, one yard, &c.; cardboard coins; common scales with weights, or bags filled with sand in lieu of weights; and measures such as a tin holding a pint—the pupils should be taught to perform the operations of measuring, weighing, &c., and of using money such as is involved in buying goods. In few schools is anything like this attempted; in only one can we remember seeing the children “go shopping” when learning the compound rules. Though we have spoken on this matter in former reports, we have thought it necessary to refer to it again, as its importance cannot be too highly estimated, and we earnestly hope that teachers will realize the benefits of adopting some such measures as those we have referred to.

At the same time we do not wish it to be understood that the arithmetic in our schools has made no advance. Indeed, we think that, relatively speaking, the degree of proficiency now attained is very gratifying, and year by year we find that much real progress is evident.

*Geography and Nature-study.*—On the whole, a reasonable amount of progress is shown. Records of various kinds detailing the results of the children's observations are more frequently met with, and in some schools there already exist the beginnings of school museums. Here and there we have remarked a tendency on the part of the teacher to use technical terms. No doubt high-sounding names impress the Maori very much, but they are no more effective than the simple terms of ordinary language, and the latter should therefore be invariably used in preference. Teachers are advised also not to attempt to cover too much ground in their schemes of nature-study; a few things thoroughly dealt with will serve the purpose infinitely better than a large number merely touched upon, and, if the pupils are to make personal acquaintance in each case with what is being studied, they cannot be expected to deal with many subjects during the year.

With regard to the geography itself we find that there is yet a want of appreciation of the importance of teaching the children to observe natural phenomena and to acquire their knowledge by actual observation. Even yet the cardinal points are made to depend upon the pupil's right or left hand, whereas one or two lessons in the playground on the variation in the shadow cast by the sun at different times of the day would enable the children to ascertain them for themselves.

*Handwork.*—(a.) Sewing: In nearly all schools we find that sewing continues to be very well taught. The work is no longer confined to useless specimens; all kinds of useful articles are made by the girls, whose interest in the work has thereby been much increased. The desire on the part of the child to construct something, even if it is only a small handkerchief, helps largely to maintain this interest, which will be further stimulated if she can feel that what she has done is of real use, and that in doing it she has done something, however small, for herself and others. The teachers are hampered to some extent by the fact that the parents are not always willing to provide the material for garments. This difficulty, however, will disappear in time when the parents realize that there is a material benefit to themselves arising from the practical instruction given. It has been suggested that in the higher classes needlework may be more intimately correlated with arithmetic, by comparing the quantities and different prices of materials needed in the various kinds of needlework, and in estimating the cost of the garments to be made—a knowledge of which every good housewife should possess. Lessons of economy and thrift might also be illustrated in this fashion. There is another direction in which the teaching in needlework may be made of practical application. Children cannot be expected to profit much from theoretical lessons on neatness, cleanliness, and tidiness if they are allowed to come to school day after day untidy in dress. They should be encouraged to mend their own clothes, as well as those of other members of their family, and it should be a matter of reproach if a girl's dress is allowed to go unmended or her brother's shirt or coat to be untidy and buttonless. Although the syllabus in sewing appears to make hard-and-fast divisions in the work, teachers are practically free to carry out their own arrangements. Girls of the same acquirements should be taught together no matter what standard they may belong to, otherwise their time will be subject to considerable waste. Further, we desire to emphasize the need for a greater amount of instruction in cutting-