

Although ten candidates competed at the last examination, it is not considered that the schools, in view of their generally increased efficiency, were adequately represented in the competition. The trustees have expressed their dissatisfaction with the interest displayed in the competition, and have advised the Department of their intention to consider seriously the withdrawal of the scholarship from competition. It is felt that such a course would be regrettable, and it behoves teachers to avoid the reproach that such action on the part of the trustees will place upon them.

The *Buller Scholarship* is provided from funds derived from a bequest made by the late Sir Walter Buller in the interests of Maori education. The scholarship, which is tenable at Te Aute College, is of the annual value of £30, and is reserved for competition amongst Maori lads who are predominantly Maori, half-castes being ineligible. The papers set for this examination, which is also conducted by the Department, provide a more difficult test than those set for the senior Te Makarini examination, and are based upon a syllabus in the following subjects: English (including civics and New Zealand history), agriculture, Maori, and woodwork or elementary mathematics. There is in addition an examination, conducted by the Waiapu Diocesan authorities, in religious knowledge. Six candidates from Te Aute College and six from St. Stephen's School sat for the examination. The most successful candidates were Henry Atatu (St. Stephen's), 66 per cent.; June te Moana (St. Stephen's), 64 per cent.; and Wharewhiti Cotter (Te Aute), with 61 per cent. The scholarship was awarded to Henry Atatu.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

In concluding the report for the year 1923, a feature in connection with Native schools and their work may be referred to, and that is the noticeable general stability of the schools in regard to attendance. There is a steady increase in attendance in a very large number of the schools, and serious fluctuations in the roll number are not now encountered. It would appear that the people are becoming less migratory, and that they are engaging more and more in occupations which confine their attentions to their own districts. It is a very rare occurrence now to find schools disorganized by failure of crops, or by fanatical outbursts on the part of uninstructed sections of the people. The desire for the education of their children is very keen among the people, who, speaking generally, recognize and feel that without the means of education they are unable to move with the tide of progress. To this attitude of mind the influence of the schools and the teachers has largely contributed, and this influence is being exercised with increasing force as the years pass by. It is gratifying to find that the majority of teachers look upon themselves as missionaries of civilization generally, and do not confine their attentions to the duties of school-teaching only. Nothing has had a more salutary effect in implanting within the people the desire for advancement than the establishment of schools among them, and the discovery on their part that the teachers have their general welfare at heart, and do not look upon their schools merely as a means of getting a livelihood. Teachers who find themselves unattracted by this aspect of the work, or who cannot get on amicably with the people, should realize that they have mistaken their vocation, and should therefore seek to earn their living in some other way.

In the examination and inspection of the Native village schools, the mission schools, and the boarding-schools I have to acknowledge the assistance rendered by Mr. Henderson, Inspector of Native Schools.

I have, &c.,

JNO. PORTEOUS,

Senior Inspector of Native Schools.

The Director of Education.