

Under the scheme of co-operation between the Fijian Government and this Department nine Fijian schools were inspected by Mr. W. W. Bird, M.A. The Department has rendered the usual assistance to all Island schools in connection with the filling of vacancies by advertising the positions in the *New Zealand Education Gazette*.

18. RETIREMENT OF INSPECTORS.

At the end of the year Mr. W. W. Bird, M.A., Superintendent of Native Education, retired from the Service, with which he had been intimately connected since the 1st February, 1901, first as an organizing teacher and later as Inspector, Senior Inspector, and Superintendent of Native Education. His contribution towards the education of the Maori has been invaluable and unique, the great love in which he is held by the Maori people bearing witness to his sympathetic understanding and integrity. Teachers always found him the source of powerful inspiration and help. Mr. Bird compiled the Native-school code and subsequent amendments and additions to the curriculum, and was largely responsible for raising Native education to its present high plane.

During the year Mr. G. M. Henderson, M.A., Inspector of Native Schools, who had completed forty years in State Departments, retired after twelve years spent in Native education. He was keenly interested in the Maori and in Maori history and tradition. He brought to his work an untiring energy and strong enthusiasm, especially aiming at more informal and vital methods.

CONCLUSION.

Within the last two years the administrative organization of the Native schools has been completely remodelled. All requisitions for supplies are now received at the one time, thus enabling bulk purchase to be effected and the distribution of the supplies to the schools in time for the opening of the school year. This method of purchasing in bulk has resulted in a substantial saving.

The examination and inspection of Native schools has also been revised, and a less formal system substituted, enabling more time to be devoted to constructive criticism and demonstration. As an inherent constituent of this change in policy a reversal from the old formal type of instruction has been demanded and a more vivid method of presentation, combined with activity, alertness, and initiative on the part of the child, has been substituted. Many teachers have found great difficulty in adapting themselves to the new requirements. Notwithstanding this, it is a matter of gratification that they, as a body, have given whole-hearted co-operation and are making every effort to adapt themselves to the new conditions.

It is perhaps particularly appropriate that reference should be made to the loyal and courageous services given to the children and to the cause of education generally by those Native-school teachers who were in the area stricken by the Hawke's Bay earthquake in February last year.

Owing to the postponement of the permanent appointment of a Native-school Inspector to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Mr. G. M. Henderson, M.A., it was arranged that Mr. T. A. Fletcher, Editor of the *School Journal*, should assist temporarily in the inspection and examination of the Native schools. In this connection I have to acknowledge the valuable service given by Mr. Fletcher.

I have also to express my appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered by the staff of the Native-schools Branch of the Head Office.

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D. G. BALL, Inspector of Native Schools.

The Director of Education.