

evident misconceptions have been gained by pupils owing to the failure to teach all new words and to avoid technicalities."

"Plot Work."—This has developed to a pleasing standard of careful technique in most schools. There are still evidences of intermittent work. Two new departures were introduced in order to bring school work into line with the modern ideas of husbandry: (a) Use of certified seed potatoes as trial against any local selection; (b) diagnostic study of grasses. The attention paid to these plots in the various schools showed the appeal of such work to the local adults."

"Club Work."—This has continued to grow, and in response to requests from butter-factories, committees, and local farmers, 140 children (from twenty schools) reared calves and 100 children had home plots. In some schools both home plots and calf clubs were organized."

"Co-operation."—The linking for crop-study of school and home has not made the progress expected. It is hoped that teachers will give this important feature full consideration."

14. ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION.

The desire to quicken the individual spirit and to replace much of the stereotyped class-teaching by motivated activity and intelligent participation by the child in its school-work is beginning to result in the development of a happier, more self-reliant Maori child. Oral English has benefited most by the change, and a high standard of fluency in oral expression has been attained in many of the Native schools. There is, however, still much need to continue the study of the drills and devices for the correction of the common Maori errors in grammatical structure.

Some improvement in the written composition has been effected, but progress has not been as marked as it might have been, owing to the extra attention and time demanded by oral English. Nevertheless, in a number of schools the quality of the written English was very good. Weaknesses in the teaching of formal English must still be reported, although the special methods and oral drills devised to form good speech habits were effective and commendable. Throughout the year the necessity to "teach" spelling was stressed. In many schools, owing to the poor choice of spelling words, this subject was unable to assist in vocabulary building to the extent of which it is capable. Oral reading has been maintained at a high standard, both in clearness of expression and in intelligent rendering. Silent reading continued to suffer from a paucity of suitable reading material, but the teachers are attending to the formation of good silent-reading habits.

Recitation, on the whole, was not altogether satisfactory. In many schools it continued to be regarded more as a test of memorization than as a means for demonstrating the beauty of words and thought. The mere rendering of the poems was marked by good enunciation, but many teachers failed to develop the appreciative side of this subject. It is expected that when a poem is read or recited by the children it shall present to the minds of the listeners vivid mental pictures of the various characters and scenes. While it is true that memorization of a number of suitable poems and prose extracts was required, it is more important that the children should be attracted to the subject by the teacher's frequent reading to the class of bright, suitable poems. In this connection many of the poems chosen for study were of too abstract a nature.

During 1933 arithmetic improved materially, more especially in the methodical arrangement of the written work and in speed and accuracy in mechanical number. In the senior division the weakness in the problem work continued to be due to the lack of comprehension by the children of the technical terms and processes of this subject. There is a tendency to treat problem work as a test in mental gymnastics. Teachers generally have not realized the fact that, in the case of Native children whose experiences in English money, weights, and measures are very limited, it is absolutely essential not only that the teacher should demonstrate the processes, but that the children themselves should become thoroughly familiar with them by practical experience in buying and selling, giving change, weighing, measuring, &c.

Stories of Maori and New Zealand history have occupied the greater part of the allotted time for this subject, and both the retelling of these stories and their dramatization were regular practices in all Native schools. It is proposed to include a greater amount of instruction in civics and in social conduct.

Geography was still treated along traditional lines, difficulty being experienced in persuading the teachers to treat this subject in a sufficiently practical manner. At present most of the geography instruction is unrelated to the Maori's knowledge of his own district.

Singing varied considerably in standard in different schools, but, on the whole, the quality was assessed as good.

Except that there was still too much retardation in the Primer classes, this division was, perhaps, the strongest in the school, and one wherein the new methods were most easily applied.

15. PROFICIENCY.

This year all candidates were examined at a synchronous examination held on the 30th November. Two hundred and forty-four candidates were presented for the examination, of whom 148 were awarded proficiency certificates and thirty-eight competency certificates.

16. MAORI MISSION SCHOOLS.

There are eleven mission schools controlled and maintained by denominational authorities. All these schools were visited by your Inspectors, and all satisfied the conditions necessary for their registration.

Five hundred and fifty-two children were enrolled at these mission schools, the average attendance at which was 476.