

My first object was of course to secure the attendance of children, and although aware of the limited amount of funds available, I have not ventured to refuse admission to any who have come. At our district meeting last year it was thought 20 would be as many as we should raise; but my efforts to secure that number have resulted in the attendance of many more. Prudence of course suggested the discontinuation of all further invitations, as I found that out expenses would be greater than our friends would bear.

Many of the parents promised contributions of provisions, but in this matter I have thus far met with considerable disappointment. The protracted hostilities among the Natives had caused them to neglect their cultivations and involved them deeply in debt, so that most of their disposable produce has been required either to meet these claims or for the supply of personal wants. Some contributions were received at the beginning, but on making application for a continuation of such supplies the reply has been that all their provisions have been disposed of in this way. I trust however that we shall succeed better in future.

And we have had no local sources of supply. The Missionary committee have liberally allowed 20 acres of land for the use of the school, but until this shall have been brought into a state of productive cultivation it can be of no immediate aid. This of course has been attended to to the best of our judgment and ability, and the bigger lads of the school in the intervals of school hours have been employed to assist in fencing, clearing, cultivating, planting, &c.

In thus commencing anew this important undertaking I have considered it essential to success that both the children and parents should, especially in the beginning, have no cause of complaint on the subject of diet. This is a point on which natives are exceedingly tenacious, and though the parents have contributed little enough in this line themselves, yet if they were to get the idea of a want of liberality on our part they would instantly remove their children from the school. Let the children first make some progress in acquiring knowledge and obtain a taste for schooling, and we may then gradually restrict and retrench and economise in the matter of diet. At the native villages their food is often poor and scant and mean enough but they often on the other hand have in their way variety and luxury and feasting.

Of course the year or rather the 10 months of the year have been characterised by the immature plans interruptions and disorder incident to all new beginnings. The situation and locality of the establishment are in many respects highly appropriate, but at the time I opened the school my residence was three miles away. This was providential and necessary during the war, but now that peace was restored and I had opened the school, I was instructed to remove to the Mission House in the neighbourhood of the Institution, and this removal of course involved interruption and labour and expense.

My numerous engagements as a missionary to the native tribes of this place rendered it necessary that I should have assistance in the management of the school, and I was fortunate in meeting with a suitable person in Mr. Collins, whom I engaged as teacher. He is a worthy young man and bids fair to be very valuable and very successful. The amount of his salary is to be fixed by the Board of Education. We have no matron, no cook, no housekeeper; the washing and mending are attended to by my own family and no expense is incurred in these matters.

Our division and appropriation of time are as follows: 6 to 7 washing dressing and prayer, 7 to 8 breakfast, 8 to 10 work, 10 to 12 school, 12 to 1 dinner, 1 to 2 play, 2 to 4 school, 4 to 6 work, 6 to seven supper, 7 to 8 reading the scriptures and worship.

From the above remarks it will be seen that this is more a history of a beginning than a report of progress and success. Some progress however has been made; many of the lads are very young and but few of them knew a letter of the alphabet when they first came to us; now however they can mostly begin to read and write a little, several can write a tolerably fair copy and are making progress in cyphering. Two half-caste boys and one native who were sometime connected with the former school can speak English, and one of them can read it correctly. The lessons and exercises are chiefly in English.

The conduct of the boys is generally satisfactory, and we trust, by the blessing of God upon our persevering endeavours, this institution will be a means of great advantage to the Maori youth, both intellectually and morally, both for time and eternity.

(Signed) J. WHITELEY.