

At Parikino, on the 6th instant, I found only 9 children in attendance, 7 boys and 2 girls, out of 24 on the roll. This was most disheartening to the teacher, and spoilt the examination. He complained bitterly of the irregularity of the attendance, notwithstanding the efforts that had been made to secure an improvement in this respect; and he informed me that since the late sittings of the Land Court at Whanganui, to which many of the parents and children went, the attendance at school had been worse than ever, and it was doubtful whether some of the absent scholars ever came back again, as the parents talked of moving off to Murimotu.

I first examined Walter Williams, son of the late John Williams, a celebrated Whanganui chief, whose distinguished services during the late war are well known to the Government and the colony at large, in whose service he lost his life in repelling the Hau-Hau invasion on this river in 1865, and was gratified to find that he was making good use of his opportunities, and hope hereafter to see him take up a position of influence amongst his tribe. He read fluently, from Phillips's 4th Reading Book, an account of the ascent of Mount Egmont in 1840, by Dr. Dieffenbach; understood well the meaning thereof, and spelt words correctly. He also recited "The Burial of Sir John Moore," and gave a good explanation of the story therein recounted, besides repeating and explaining the piece entitled "The British Navy." His class-mate, Alick Korako, was not present, to the great disappointment of his father, Hakaria, whose authority and control he seems disposed to set at naught. The whole school was then examined in geography, first on map of the world, of which they evinced a good knowledge, describing the divisions thereof into land and water, and naming the continents, oceans, seas, islands, &c. They pointed out the Suez and San Francisco routes, giving the lands, islands, and seas passed on each ocean route; further, particularizing the British possessions upon or contiguous thereto. The Suez Canal was likewise referred to, and its position and uses described.

Of the New Zealand map they showed a good knowledge, and seem to make ready progress in this important branch of their studies; in proof of which I attach maps of New Zealand and Palestine, executed by W. Williams and Alick Korako, the former coloured, which do these lads much credit. I also examined them in arithmetic and tables, and those boys who had attended at all regularly acquitted themselves very creditably when questioned on these subjects. The juniors did sums to long division, and senior class to practice and simple interest. Specimens of writing were then exhibited, which I enclose: on the whole they are good exhibitions of calligraphy. The girls and younger boys read fairly out of the 1st Book; spelling pretty well, and showing some knowledge of the meaning. Pronunciation improving. Further recitations were then given by two of the boys, W. Fox and Tuka, and by the two girls, which were, on the whole, well rendered.

The two girls then exhibited specimens of needlework, with trimmings of crochet lace, which were very neatly done. They had also been instructed in knitting; and initiated into sundry household matters, such as the making and baking of bread, ironing, &c.

One of the little girls had been boarding in the establishment, and she showed marked improvement in her appearance, dress, and manners, and has picked up a good deal of English. Walter Williams has commenced to learn grammar, and has made a creditable beginning. The singing was improved, and a subscription has been started to purchase a harmonium, and when procured it will be a great acquisition to the school. The teacher has likewise given instructions in drill, which will be of some advantage to the children, in improving their gait, &c.

On the 6th of June, I held an examination of the children attending the Iruharama School, of whom 28 boys and 6 girls were present. Opened proceedings by repeating the Lord's Prayer in English, and singing a hymn, which had a most pleasing effect. I then examined the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd classes out of "Willie's First English Book," 2nd, 3rd, and 4th *Koreros*, translating Maori sentences into English, and English into Maori; explaining meaning and spelling words. Great pains had evidently been taken by the teacher in getting them on in the reading of this useful book, and the progress made was most satisfactory.

First class then read a chapter or two out of Royal Reader No. 4, page 122. Reading, spelling, and meaning of same by some, very good, others fair, rest indifferent.

First class was then examined in geography: book used, Phillips's Colonial Series. With map of New Zealand they seemed well acquainted, and were submitted to a thorough examination by Mr. Donaldson, who must have taken great trouble to teach them, as they evinced a good knowledge of the country, including both islands; pointing out the provinces, capitals, rivers, lakes, mountains, capes, bays and bights, friths, harbours, straits, and islands.

The juniors were then questioned by the monitor, Pio Hemoata, from the illustrated alphabet, pointing out on the map the countries inhabited by the different races thereon portrayed. Mr. Donaldson adopts this method of initiating the juveniles into some acquaintance with geography, and of the customs and habits of the various people of the world, and of the animals and products of foreign lands. It was quite amusing to see the interest taken by the little ones in this branch of their education, and they vied with one another in answering the questions given. In figures fair progress was made, some of the elder ones having got as far as compound multiplication and reduction. A commencement has also been made in doing sums by dictation, a very good method, which will prove useful to the pupils in after life. The powers of the children in addition and subtraction were severely tested by means of the ball frame, and much quickness and aptitude shown by them in ready reckoning. Specimens of needlework by the girls were then exhibited, and the sewing was exceedingly good.