

The singing of all the children was much improved, a number of hymns and songs having been well rendered. A goodly number of the parents were present, and they took great interest in the proceedings.

I started a subscription for a harmonium, and over £9 was subscribed on the spot, which sum will shortly be further augmented; and I trust that in a few months a couple of those instruments will be secured, as music and singing will help to make the schools attractive.

Before concluding this report, I desire to record my appreciation of the efficient manner in which the school teachers have carried out their arduous duties; and beg to recommend them to your favourable consideration.

I have, &c.,

RICHARD W. WOON,
Resident Magistrate.

Sir D. McLean, K.C.M.G., &c., Wellington.

No. 10.

The Rev. J. W. STACK, Christchurch, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 27th May, 1876.

I have the honor to enclose the report of my inspection of the Native schools in Nelson and Canterbury for the year ending June, 1876. The number of the Native and half-caste children in the South Island, under 15 years, may be roughly set down at 900; allowing for those who are too young to attend school, there must be about 500 children who ought to be under instruction. The return attached to my report shows that 209 were present at the several inspections held by me. Adding the occasional attendants and those who may be receiving instruction privately, the number being educated may be set down at 250, or half the number who ought to be at school. If this result does not seem satisfactory, it must be borne in mind that the education of the Native children is being carried on against the determined opposition of a large portion of the adult population.

Every facility has been given to the Native parents to educate their children. Not only have schools been provided for them by the Government, but they have been relieved of the cost of maintaining them. All the Maoris require to do is to send their children, but this a great many refuse to do, and if it were not for the interest taken in the matter by the local Government officers, and such influential Natives as Kerei Taiaroa, Irai Tihau, and Te Rore, the number of Native children receiving instruction would be exceedingly small. It is hardly possible for those who have not experienced the senseless opposition offered by many of the Natives to the attempts made to educate their children to understand how people usually so intelligent can refuse to avail themselves of those institutions which can alone restore their race to a position of influence in the State. The absence of schools supplies the Maoris with a good cry that they are neglected; when they are provided with them they either do not send their children, or, if they do, they seem at pains to hinder their advancement in learning. Only in a few solitary instances do the parents render hearty assistance to the teacher and encourage him in his arduous work. It is hopeless to expect any improvement as long as the Maoris believe that by letting their children grow up in ignorance they are strengthening their claims to compensation for their lands. The only effectual remedy would be to make education compulsory. It would be very easy to enforce such a law in this island, and as long as the education is free no hardship would be inflicted on the Natives. Why should the State allow these Maori children to grow up in ignorance and vice under the very walls of the schools, provided at such cost to rescue them from such evils, but which their parents, to gratify a silly whim, will not allow them to enter?

Under all the circumstances, I think it is a matter for congratulation that the attendance at the schools is larger by 64 this year than last, and, although this increase is chiefly owing to the opening of three new schools, it is satisfactory as giving evidence that, instead of losing, we have, on the whole, gained ground.

I am glad to report that at most of the schools visited by me a decided advance was noticeable in the attainments of the children.

Hitherto I have adopted the course customary with inspectors, and visited the schools without notice, but I am now so thoroughly convinced of the necessity of creating a greater interest in the work of the schools, that in future I purpose inviting all the parents, and as many English friends as I can induce to be present, to come and witness the examination. I should be glad if the Government could see fit to give me authority to expend from £1 to £2 for prizes at each school; and a list of the prize-takers might, with advantage, be published in the *Waka Maori*.

I have, &c.,

JAMES W. STACK,
Inspector.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 10.

Kaiapoi Native School: Master, Mr. H. J. Reeves.—This school has been regularly visited by me during the year, and the work being done examined, but the annual inspection did not