

Serious charges, I was given to understand, had been perferred against the master; but, from all I could gather, the Natives had exaggerated a great deal, and were rather influenced by spite. Mr. Tom Pratt, the chairman of the school committee, told me that he was, till quite lately, so highly satisfied that he had begged for an increase to be made to Mr. Maloney's salary, and that it was owing to what he had heard that he had been led to regard him with less favour. The result of the examination proved that during the nine months the school had been open Mr. Maloney must have worked hard and well.

While it is desirable by means of these Native school committees to awaken a greater interest amongst the Maoris themselves in education, care must be taken to prevent them becoming a hindrance by interfering with the teachers. They do not contribute anything towards the erection of the buildings or to the maintenance of the teachers, and yet they try to assume control over both. It would be easy to frame a few rules for the guidance of the school committees, which would prevent them exceeding their functions, and prevent the risk of good teachers being driven away.

*Little River School*: Established April, 1876. Inspected March 6th, 1877. Master, Mr. H. J. Reeves.—Highest number on the books: Boys, 14; girls, 10: total, 24. Present at inspection, 23.

1st Class: Reading, Royal Reader No. 2. Number in class, 4. Reading good; pronunciation good. Spelling: One, good; two, fair; one, imperfect.

2nd Class: Royal Reader No. 1. Number in class, 5. Three, good; two, fair; pronunciation fair. Spelling: Two, good; two, fair; one, imperfect.

3rd Class: Royal School Primer. Number in class, 6. All read fairly. Spelling fair.

4th Class: Number in class, 7. Reading imperfect; spelling imperfect. A glance at the time during which the school has been opened will account for this.

Dictation: Eight, good; four, fair.

Arithmetic: Ten could do addition and subtraction fairly; one, multiplication fairly; one, compound rules well. All figures well formed, and neatly set down. Eleven forming figures on their slates. Tables: All proficient in multiplication tables, money table, and weights and measures.

Geography: Fifteen out of twenty-three could point out any of the principal places on the map of New Zealand or Europe, and all seemed fairly up in the subject.

Object Lessons: Lessons on Water and a Bell were given by the master. The children answered very readily in English all the questions put to them. This is a most excellent exercise in English.

Drill: All the children displayed great proficiency, going through the various exercises with precision.

Singing: The children sang several English songs so intelligently that they were requested, at the close of the examination, to sing at a public entertainment in the evening.

The progress made by the pupils in this school is very creditable to Mr. Reeves. With the exception of three or four who came with him from Kaiapoi, none of those examined knew a letter in April, 1876. Within that time they have acquired all they know.

The list of subjects, and their classification, show not only diligence on the part of the teachers, but aptitude on the part of the scholars.

The opening of the new school buildings on the 6th of March was made the occasion for a public demonstration by the Maoris, who wished to testify their appreciation of what had been done for the benefit of their children. They all turned out in holiday attire to welcome their European neighbours, whom they had invited to be present, and who mustered in large numbers.

The buildings stand in a conspicuous position, in the centre of the Native village. The master's house contains four rooms, lined and ceiled throughout; detached, but only a few feet from it, stands the schoolroom, 30 feet long and 18 feet wide. It is also lined and well finished, and supplied with all the necessary appliances. The buildings, which cost £358, were erected at the cost of the General Government. The site, which contains about two acres, belongs to the Maoris, who have securely fenced it at their own cost.

For many years past the Natives here have opposed the erection of school buildings on their land, because they distrusted the motives of the Government in offering to educate their children. They do not hesitate still to say that the expenditure on schools is merely a sop offered by the Government to prevent their agitating for their legitimate rights—namely, the right to be maintained by the Government, the right to demand and obtain anything they choose to ask for.

The public examination was followed by sports, and in the evening a tea-meeting and entertainment took place, when the children recited poetry and sang English songs. The Europeans all expressed themselves as highly pleased with what they had seen; and two gentlemen, Messrs. Coop and Joblin, not only presented several prizes on this occasion to the best scholars, but gave £1 each towards the prizes for the next annual examination.

I am glad to report that the school is in a very efficient state, and do not hesitate to say that the Maoris of Little River will only have themselves to blame if their children do not profit by the teaching of so good and zealous a master as Mr. Reeves.

I must not close my report without bringing to the notice of the Government the assistance I have received from Henare Tawha, the chairman of the committee, but more especially from the Assessors, Tamati Tikao and Eli Tihau.

*Molyneux School*.—Having twice visited this school without finding any children, I requested my friend the Rev. Francis Knowles to ascertain whether there was any necessity for my going there. He informed me that no children had attended at the district school during the past year, though Mr. Wilson and others had tried to induce the parents to send them. He found that Ihaia Potiki had been writing to the Government petitioning that a Maori school might be established at their *kainga* and stating that twenty-five children could attend; but as one-fourth are really adults, and another fourth infants, half the number is all that could be regularly counted upon. Miss Jones, a lady in the neighbourhood, has, for eleven months past, been giving eight of the young Maoris lessons on Saturday afternoons in reading, writing, and arithmetic. This lady has expressed her willingness to give up her whole time to teaching; and if she would consent to instruct the children at the rate of £3 a-head per