

1880.

NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE SCHOOLS IN SOUTH ISLAND

(REPORTS OF REV. J. STACK ON).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 8th July, 1880.

“That there be laid on the table of this House copies of the reports of Rev. J. Stack on Native Schools in the South Island.”—(*Mr. Tainui.*)

Rev. J. W. STACK to the SECRETARY, Education Department.

I HEREWITH enclose my report on the Native schools in the South for the year, 1879 to 1880.

John Hislop, Esq., Secretary, Education Department.

JAMES W. STACK,
Inspector.

Rapaki: Master, Mr. Patrick Herlihy.—Inspected 12th December, 1879. Highest number on the roll: Boys, 10; girls, 14: total, 24.

Reading: Book, 2nd Royal Reader. Three good, six fair. Pronunciation imperfect. Style rather too drawing. Spelling fair. Dictation: one very good, one good, seven fair.—Book, 1st Royal Reader. Five good, seven fair, three imperfect. Book rather too hard for the last three in the class. Meaning fairly understood. Spelling: eight fair. The same faulty style of reading prevails in this class as in the other.

Arithmetic: Notation and numeration up to hundreds of thousands. All were ready at setting down and reading the figures. Multiplication table and money table: nine good, eight fair. Simple multiplication and subtraction: two good, six fair, four imperfect. Addition: twelve, commencing.

Writing: Copy-books: three good, ten fair. Of the exercise books three were neat and well written.

Geography: Twelve had a fair knowledge of geographical terms.

Recitations: Four recited poetry fluently, showing they had been at pains to learn it, but their pronunciation was faulty.

Singing: The children sang several songs in a very pleasing and spirited manner, under Mrs. Herlihy's direction.

Drill: Nothing is attempted beyond marching in and out of school in an orderly manner.

Sewing: Sewing is taught by Mrs. Herlihy: several specimens of excellent work were shown. The girls cut out and sew their own clothes under Mrs. Herlihy's direction.

Object-lessons: I was glad to find that these formed part of weekly course of instruction.

The discipline of the school is excellent; the children were all clean, quiet, and well behaved. The schoolroom was very clean, and everything about it arranged neatly. The school was opened in November, 1878, and most of the children in attendance have never been under instruction before. Taking this fact into consideration, the progress of the school has been very satisfactory. Both the master and mistress take pains to interest the children in their lessons, and to promote habits of personal cleanliness. Entering the school unexpectedly on several occasions during the past year, I have always found the children very clean; and the improvement in their appearance and behaviour has been remarked by European residents in the neighbourhood.

The School Committee commemorated the opening of the school this year by a dinner, to which they invited their European and Maori friends. The children were also entertained, and sports held for their amusement during the afternoon. Ihaia te Kotuku, the energetic member of the Committee, through whose exertions nearly £20 were collected to defray the expenses of the anniversary festival, has, I regret to say, since died. Though he had no children of his own, he always took a deep interest in the success of the school, and his loss will not be easily repaired. He belonged to that honorable class of Maoris that receives few recruits from the rising generation.

The Neck, Stewart Island: Master, Mr. Arthur Traill.—Inspected, 1st March, 1880. Register carefully kept. Highest number on roll, 21. Present at inspection: Boys, 12; girls, 9: total, 21.

Reading: Book, 4th Royal Reader. Five good, five fair. Three in this class have made considerable progress since my last examination. The pronunciation was generally good, and all knew the meaning of the text. The attendance of five out of the class had been very irregular during the past year. Dictation: Both the writing and spelling of this class were very fair.—Book, 3rd Royal Reader. Two fair. Text understood. Dictation: Writing fair, spelling imperfect.—Book, 2nd Royal Reader. Four good, two fair. Lesson understood. Spelling imperfect.—Book, 1st Royal Reader. One good, one fair. Spelling: one fair, one imperfect.—Learning to read, three.

Arithmetic: Compound proportion and vulgar fractions: three worked fairly, but all require to be more exact, trifling errors occurring in most of the sums. Practice: one good, three fair, one imperfect. Compound multiplication: one fair, four imperfect. Simple multiplication: three, imperfect. Addition: two fair, one imperfect. The lower classes would be improved by more practice in mental arithmetic. Tables, and weights and measures: Nine knew multiplication table well, six imperfectly; seven knew weights and measures fairly well.

Writing: 1st Class: One good, two fair, three imperfect.—2nd Class: five, imperfect.—3rd Class: One fair, three imperfect. All the writing, especially the small-hand copies of the first class, too cramped. Exercise-books: Three containing exercises in navigation were fairly written, the figures good, and books clean. Original essays: Ten tried to write on a subject I fixed; six acquitted themselves very creditably.

Geography: Five showed a tolerable acquaintance with the geography of New Zealand.

Sewing: Mrs. Traill gives instruction in sewing: the specimens of work shown were very good.

Music: Mrs. Traill also instructs the children in singing.

The schoolroom was very clean, and the books and maps, &c., in good order and neatly arranged. Both the schoolroom and master's house require painting outside. The discipline of the school is good. The children were very quiet and well-behaved during the examination, and were all clean and well clad. The master complained that the elder boys were continually being taken away to work in the cutters. One boy in the 1st Class had only attended school seventy, and another only forty-eight days during the past year. As soon as the children, whether boys or girls, are old enough to be of use, they are taken away, just when the teaching is beginning to tell.

Since November, 1879, Mr. Traill has been paid a regular salary, instead of the capitation allowance formerly granted to him. The new arrangement is both fairer and more agreeable.

The half-caste men in the south, unlike the Maoris, are most anxious to provide for the comfort, as well as for the bare necessities of their families. They seem to possess a higher sense of their responsibilities towards them; and this impels them to seek regular work, in order to obtain the necessary means for providing what they want. Most of the men at the Neck are working in cutters owned by themselves, or at the saw-mills, of which there are two in the island. It is unfortunate that they still adhere to the Maori custom of annually visiting the mutton-bird islands, as it thoroughly disorganises their domestic arrangements, and is attended with many evil consequences. Living together for many weeks in a "huggermugger" style, gorging themselves on oily mutton-bird flesh, is neither conducive to health of body or mind. It is always a serious hindrance to the work of the school, as it not only breaks off the work for many weeks entirely, but also unsettles the children for a long time before and after the expedition. Perhaps the people find the strain put upon their natural inclinations by the real efforts they make to live as civilized persons too great to endure for twelve months together, and require this period of wild license to reconcile them to face once more the labours and restraints imposed by our civilization.

The children took tea with their parents and friends in the schoolroom after the examination, each household having contributed some part of the good cheer provided. A meeting was afterwards held, over which Mr. Peora, the Chairman of the School Committee, presided. All the speakers testified to the valuable services rendered to their community by Mr. and Mrs. Traill, and most of them referred with satisfaction to the formation by the Government of the road between the two villages and the school. It was a work that was very much wanted, and will prove of great service to all the residents in the place.

Riverton: Master, Mr. J. Ireland.—Inspected 8th March, 1880. Highest number on roll: Boys, 16; girls, 11: total, 27. There are also 3 men under instruction. The master's attention was called to rules 8 and 9, attached to the register, which had not been complied with.

Reading: Sequel to Royal Reader No. 4. One good, two fair. Pronunciation fair. Meaning of text understood. Dictation: Writing good. Spelling very imperfect. Grammar: Three can distinguish the parts of speech.—Book, 4th Royal Reader. Two fair, three imperfect. Only three books for this class, one in tatters. The reading of this class has improved since last examination, but they still slur over the final consonants when pronouncing words. Dictation: Writing fair. Spelling: three good, two fair.—Book, 3rd Royal Reader. Two fair. Meaning understood. Spelling fair.—Book, 2nd Royal Reader. Two fair. Meaning understood. Spelling fair.—Book, 1st Royal Reader. Four imperfect.—Learning the alphabet, 4.

Arithmetic: Division and fractions, compound division and multiplication: three good, three fair. Simple multiplication; three fair. Addition and subtraction: two fair, three imperfect.

Writing: 1st Class: Four fair, six imperfect. The books, with few exceptions, blotted, and carelessly written.—2nd Class: One good, three fair. The writing on slates was generally better than on paper. The copy-books have hitherto been supplied by the parents.

Geography: Five had a good knowledge of geographical terms, and of the geography of New Zealand.

Singing: Not taught.

Drill: Not regularly taught.

Sewing: Miss Ireland gives instruction in sewing, and under her direction the elder girls have made their own clothes. The specimens of sewing shown were very neatly done.

The schoolroom was tolerably clean. The discipline of the school is much improved: the children were far more orderly than during any previous examination. The schoolroom and the adjoining church were being repaired and painted while I was at Riverton, the result of a visit lately paid by the Hon. Mr. Rolleston to the school. The master is greatly in want of books, as many of those in use are falling to pieces. I advised him to forward a requisition at once for what he wanted.

Port Molyneux: Mistress, Miss Jones.—Visited 11th March, 1880. Miss Jones was unfortunately absent when I arrived at the Native village, but I was pleased to observe that all the children I met, at that early hour, had clean hands and faces, and well-brushed hair. I went to the schoolroom in company with the members of the Committee, and the children having been summoned, 9 answered to their names: these I examined.

Reading: Book, 4th Royal Reader. Two fair. Pronunciation fair. Meaning understood. Spelling imperfect. Dictation fair.—Sequel to Royal Reader No. 3. Three fair, one imperfect. Pronunciation not distinct enough. Meaning understood. Dictation: Writing, good. Spelling fair.—Book, 2nd Royal Reader. Two fair. Lesson understood. Spelling fair.

Arithmetic: Tables, and weights and measures: two good, five imperfect. Compound reduction: one, fair. Simple division: one fair, two imperfect. Simple multiplication: one, fair. Addition: one fair, three imperfect.

Writing: Copy-books: three good, four fair. The exercise-books of this class were clean, and neatly written.

Drawing: Three had made tolerable progress. But drawing is an accomplishment that might very well be dispensed with in Native schools, unless evidence of special talent is exhibited.

Singing: In the absence of the mistress, I could not judge of the progress made.

Geography: All but one of the nine examined had an intelligent knowledge of geographical terms, and of general geography.

Mr. Wilson, a gentleman resident in the vicinity, who has always taken an interest in the welfare of his Maori neighbours, told me that the master of a neighbouring English school, who conducted the last examination, expressed the greatest surprise at the progress of the scholars during the short period the school has been open.

The order in which I found everything in the schoolroom when I entered was very satisfactory. The behaviour of the children was very good, and evidenced the existence of good discipline. The Natives are desirous that the Government should erect a new schoolroom and residence for the mistress. The number of Native residents is hardly sufficient to justify the expenditure, if any other way can be found of providing the necessary accommodation: the present room is quite unfit for a schoolroom. Mr. Hislop, Secretary for the Education Department, suggests the utilization of the old pilot station, now abandoned owing to a change in the mouth of the river. This building would afford ample accommodation, and is not too far from the Maori village.

Taieri Ferry: Master, Mr. C. H. Morgan.—Visited 12th March, 1880. As the master no longer receives any allowance out of the Native School Fund, I did not think it necessary to examine the Native children under his instruction. I examined the register, and took pains to ascertain that it was correct. The highest number on the roll was 9 boys, 10 girls; total, 19. Three are pure Maoris, the rest half-castes.

Waikouaiti: Master, Mr. Moloney.—Inspected 14th March, 1880. Registers carefully kept. Highest number on the roll: Boys, 19; girls, 16: total, 35. Present at inspection, 30; of these, three were English.

Reading: Book, 5th Royal Reader. Three very good, three good, three fair. The reading of this class has much improved since last examination. Words distinctly pronounced. Meaning understood. Spelling very good. Dictation: Writing not free enough, spelling good. Grammar: three could distinguish various parts of speech.—Book, 2nd Royal Reader. Five fair, one imperfect. Pronunciation fair. Meaning understood. Spelling imperfect. Dictation imperfect.—Book, 1st Royal Reader. Four fair, four imperfect. Meaning of lesson understood, but not ready in answering questions. Spelling: four fair, three imperfect. Primer, seven.

Arithmetic: Practice and simple proportion: one, fair. Compound multiplication and division: eight fair, three imperfect. Compound addition: two fair, two imperfect. Figures generally well made, and work neatly set down. Simple multiplication: one, imperfect. Simple addition: one good, one fair, two imperfect. The arithmetic is better than last year, but there still remains room for improvement.

Writing: Copy-books: One very good, eight fair, six indifferent. The writing is too cramped, owing probably to the copies used.

Geography: Four had a good knowledge of geographical terms, and of the geography of New Zealand and Europe, six an imperfect knowledge with the subject.

Singing: Miss Duncan, a young lady resident in the neighbourhood, kindly attends the school two hours a week to give instruction in singing. With the assistance of friends, Mr. Moloney has purchased a small harmonium for the use of the school, but it had not arrived when I was there.

Sewing: Mrs. Moloney has been very successful in teaching the girls all branches of this useful art. She is quite an enthusiast, and has inspired many of her pupils with an ardent desire to excel. With the kind assistance of Mr. Duncan and Mr. McLean, she has procured a sewing machine, which cost £9. I saw six of the girls go through what may be termed machine-drill, in a very smart way. The specimens of fancy and useful needlework done by twelve of the girls were excellent. Some of the half-caste girls who have gone from the school into service have given great satisfaction to their employers.

Drill: The school went through the ordinary extension motions very well.

The schoolroom was clean and neatly arranged. The children were clean and well behaved, and the general discipline of the school was good. A few members of the Committee were present at the examination, but the majority were busy harvesting and sent apologies for their absence. Several mothers were present, who evinced such interest in the proceedings that they had several times to be requested not to interrupt the children's work by their loud comments.

I was sorry to find that the experiment of employing Charles Pratt as a pupil-teacher had not succeeded, as he has lost ground during the year, and Mr. Moloney has failed in his efforts to make him work. Having outstripped the rest the boy imagines he has reached the goal.

Mr. Moloney pointed out the want of more water-tanks, and of a slight addition to his dwelling-house. As I understand his application has been granted, I need say nothing further about the matter.

I am glad to report that the most cordial relations exist between Mr. Moloney and the School Committee.

Otago Heads: Master, Mr. Lucas.—Inspected, 16th March, 1880. Registers carefully kept. Highest number on the roll: Boys, 23; girls, 22: total, 45. Present at inspection: Boys, 20; girls, 20.

Reading: Collins's English history. Three, good. The three comprising this class are most intelligent, and far in advance of the rest of the scholars. The written answers to questions on the chapter read were very fairly rendered.—Book, 5th Royal Reader. Three good, five fair. Pronunciation fair. Meaning of lesson understood.—Dictation from the lesson: Writing good, spelling fair.—Book, Sequel to 3rd Royal Reader. Two good, five fair. Pronunciation fair. Meaning understood. Spelling fair Dictation fair.—Book, 3rd Royal Reader. Three good, two fair. Pronunciation imperfect. Meaning understood. Spelling fair.—Book, 2nd Royal Reader. Four fair, one imperfect. Pronunciation fair. Spelling fair. Meaning understood.—Book, 1st Royal Reader. One fair, three imperfect. Pronunciation fair. Meaning understood. Spelling fair.—Book, Royal Primer. Three good, one fair. Pronunciation fair. Meaning understood. Spelling good.—Learning the alphabet, four.

Arithmetic: Vulgar fractions, decimal fractions, square root, interest, compound proportion: three, very good. Algebra, multiplication: three, good. Practice, simple and compound proportion: five good, one imperfect. Compound multiplication and division: two good, ten fair. Simple multiplication and division: three fair, two imperfect. Simple addition and subtraction: two good, three fair. The work throughout the school was good, the sums were neatly set down, and those worked were mostly correct.

Writing: Copy-books: Two good, fifteen fair, seven imperfect. The writing in the copy-books not very good. Exercise-books: Eight good, eight indifferent.

Maps: Four good, two fair. The names on two of the maps were very neatly written.

Geography: 1st Class: Five good, six fair. This class without the aid of a map were able to state the relative positions of various places in the world about which they were questioned.—2nd. Class: Five good, six fair. This class was familiar with the meaning of geographical terms, and with the geography of New Zealand.

Music: Occasional instruction given.

Drill: The boys were very proficient, and went through their exercises very smartly.

Sewing: Mrs. Dick gives instruction in sewing for an hour on two days in the week; she has 21 girls in her class. Specimens of sewing and wool-work were shown, which were very creditable.

The schoolroom was very clean, and neatly arranged. The children were all clean and well dressed, and the behaviour of all throughout the examination was most excellent. The schoolroom is now too small for the number taught in it, and I hope that the application of the Committee for a new schoolroom will be granted, as the present building must be injurious to the health of the children. The difficulty of maintaining order is increased by the overcrowded state of the room, which does not afford sufficient space for some of the classes to stand out of the desks when required to do so.

Before commencing the examination, the School Committee informed me that the Hon. Mr. Taiaroa had given two silver teapots, which he desired to have presented to the two pupils in the upper and lower division who gained the highest total of marks at the examination. The competition for these valuable prizes lent additional interest to the day's proceedings, and it was very gratifying to know that the result gave satisfaction to both the pupils and their friends. Emma Karetai carried off one prize, and Martha Edwards the other. Mrs. Taiaroa, in the absence of her husband, presented the prizes to the successful scholars, amidst the plaudits of their companions.

The Native community at the Heads is about to lose the advantage of Mr. Taiaroa's residence amongst them, as he is about to remove to Canterbury. The manner in which he is bringing his children up, so different from the ordinary Maori method, reflects the highest credit upon him, and affords an example which it would be well for the Maori people to copy.

The number of children now attending the school is more than Mr. Lucas can teach properly single-handed. The Committee requested me to ask the Government to allow him to engage a pupil-teacher to assist him.

Kaiapoi: Master, Mr. H. J. Reeves.—Inspected, 30th March, 1880. Highest number on the roll: Boys, 16; girls, 18; total, 34. Present at inspection: Boys, 16; girls, 17; total, 33.

Reading: Book, 6th Royal Reader. One good. This boy forms a class by himself, and is taught in a great measure privately by Mr. Reeves, in order that his instruction may not interfere with the teaching of those in the school who are less advanced. He understands English well, writes a good hand; can work sums in compound proportion, vulgar and decimal fractions; can parse fairly; and possesses a fair knowledge of English history and general geography. He can read music, and plays both the piano and harmonium.—Book, 3rd Royal Reader. Two fair. Pronunciation rather guttural and indistinct. Meaning of lesson understood. Spelling, imperfect. Dictation from lesson: Writing good, spelling imperfect.—Book, 2nd Royal Reader. Two good, two fair. Meaning of lesson understood. Spelling: two good, two imperfect.—Book, 1st Royal Reader. One good, nine fair, three imperfect. Most of the children in this class read indistinctly, and appeared very dull and stupid when questioned about the lesson.—Book, Royal Primer. Four fair, two imperfect. Learning to read: Seven.

Arithmetic: Compound addition and multiplication: two, fair. Simple addition, subtraction, multiplication: one good, one fair, two imperfect. Simple addition, subtraction: three fair, eight imperfect. Most of the work very neat, figures very good. Multiplication tables: Twelve knew tables fairly, eight up to six times. Weights and measures: four, well.

Writing: Eight good, four fair.

Geography: Seven had a fair knowledge of geographical terms, and of the geography of New Zealand and Europe.

Singing: The children sang several songs and hymns, being accompanied on the harmonium by Te Hira Mutu and John Uru.

Sewing: Mrs. Reeves teaches sewing, and produced several creditable specimens of work. Most of the little girls were wearing clothes they had sewn themselves, though the oldest of them was not more than ten years old. Mrs. Reeves complained that she was obliged to provide needles and thread at her own cost. She thought that £1 per annum would provide all she wanted.

Drill: The whole of the pupils are regularly drilled, and are very proficient.

The discipline of the school is exceedingly good. The children are quiet and well behaved; but the master complains that many of the parents do not assist him in his efforts to train the children in

cleanly and orderly habits. They take no pains to make the children learn their home lessons, and seem to throw the whole burden of correction on the master. Unfortunately for the teacher the children now attending the school are for the most part very dull. Two or three show signs of yielding to his patient and persistent efforts to draw them on, but the majority refuse to progress. This backwardness is, I think, the result of the constant succession of meetings which have taken place at Kaiapoi for years past. The children attend these meetings, and are often up till midnight listening to the speakers: their home lessons are neglected, and in school they are too wearied to exercise their minds. The evil has been pointed out to the parents, but they seem indifferent about applying the remedy.

The annual school festival was held on New Year's Day, and was attended by a large number of Europeans. One interesting feature of it was an exhibition of the various products of Maori industry, which was held in a large tent adjoining the schoolroom. It is intended to continue these exhibitions, with a view to promote industrious habits among the Maoris residing at Kaiapoi.

Wairau: Master, Mr. Fountain.—Visited 13th April, 1880. On reaching Wairau I learned that the master, Mr. Fountain, was lying ill in the hospital, and that the school had been closed for some time. I assembled the School Committee in the schoolroom, and, at their request, examined nine of the children who were present. I ascertained that there were seventeen children between the ages of four and fifteen years resident within a short distance of the school, though only eleven were in regular attendance. I was glad to find that the Natives of this village are more sober and better behaved than they used to be. Te Rore, the chief, solemnly assured me that this was in a great measure owing to the advice given by the ghost of his late son Wirihana, a promising lad, who died about eighteen months ago, and who had since his death warned the people against their drinking habits, and urged them to be more attentive to their religious duties.

Canvastown: Master, Mr. John Hart.—Inspected 15th April, 1880. Registers carefully kept. Highest number of Native children on the roll: Boys, 4; girls, 7: total, 11. This school was reopened on the 2nd of December, 1879, having been closed for six months. It is an English school, attended by Maori children.

Reading: Book, 3rd Royal Reader. Two fairly. Spelling fair. Dictation fair.—Book, 2nd Royal Reader. One well; one fairly.—Book, 1st Royal Reader. Two, just commencing the book, read with difficulty.

Arithmetic: Compound division, multiplication: four did easy sums fairly. Simple division, multiplication: two, fairly.

Writing: Five writing in copy-books: three fairly, two imperfectly.

There is a lending library in connection with the school, and the master told me that the eldest Maori boy (who happened to be absent the day I visited the school) was regularly in the habit of taking out books to read, a fact that affords satisfactory evidence of his proficiency in English. I was disappointed to find so few Native children, as it was owing to the Wairau Natives having represented the attendance here as being upwards of thirty that I thought it necessary to visit the school. The parents here pay for the books required by the children.

The master said that an application had been made to the Government for a sum of £12 towards paying a sewing mistress. He remarked that her services were required more for the Maori than the English children. I hope that the grant will be made, as sewing is a very necessary accomplishment for Native girls.

I missed seeing the Natives, as they were nearly all at Havelock attending some case in the Resident Magistrate's Court, but I saw one or two of the parents, who expressed great interest in the progress of their children.

Waikapuaka: I was informed by Mr. Alexander Mackay that this school was closed for the present, Mr. Jennings having left to read with the Bishop of Nelson for holy orders.

Waikawa: Master, Mr. Nickless.—Inspected 19th April, 1880. Register carefully kept. Highest number on the roll: Boys, 21; girls, 14: total 35. Of these, four are English, who are not included in the following classification. Present at inspection, 27.

Reading: Book, 4th Royal Reader. Number in class, two. Reading of both good. Text understood. Spelling good. Dictation fair. Commencing to parse.—Book, 3rd Royal Reader. Number in class, 9. Four good, two fair, three imperfect. Three boys in this class are about seventeen years of age, and, having begun rather late to learn to read, they have great difficulty in pronouncing distinctly; but, at the same time, they gave evidence of having paid careful attention to their instructors. Most of the class understood the meaning of the lesson. The spelling of all but the last three was good. Dictation from the reading lesson: three good, two fair, four imperfect.—Book, 2nd Royal Reader. Number in class, 11. Two good, five fair, four imperfect. Most of the children had a difficulty in pronouncing words ending with *s*, and generally omitted the final consonant of all words read. Meaning of lesson fairly understood. Spelling good. Dictation: seven fair, four imperfect.—Book, 1st Royal Reader. Two fair. Copied the words from the book fairly on their slates.—Learning alphabet, three.—The children reading the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Royal Reader have lessons given them to prepare every evening at home. The master said these lessons were generally well prepared.

Arithmetic: Compound division, multiplication, and subtraction, and vulgar fractions: two, good. Simple division, multiplication (three figures): two good, four fair, four imperfect. Simple multiplication and addition: three good, two fair, three imperfect.

Writing: Copy-books, 1st class: five good, four fair, three imperfect.—2nd class: three good, eight fair.

Geography: Eleven able to give the meaning of the various geographical terms, and to answer questions on geography of New Zealand.

Object-lessons: I was glad to find Mr. Nickless alive to the importance of object-lessons as a means of exercising the children in their knowledge of English. The lesson I heard given would have been better calculated to attain this end had it been more catechetical.

Music: The result of Mr. Nickless's knowledge of music is very apparent in the superior style in which his scholars sing. Instead of the flat dirge or hoarse bawl, so commonly heard in Native schools, the singing was harmonious and pleasing.

Sewing: Mrs. Nickless teaches all the girls sewing on three afternoons in the week. She complained of the want of materials for the girls to practice upon, as they do not bring any materials from home, their parents preferring to buy their undercloths ready-made. I would recommend a small allowance to be made as described.

Drill: The whole school went through the extension motions very well.

The discipline of the school is good, but it would be improved if less noise were allowed when the children are at their desks. A very good feeling seemed to exist between the master and his scholars, as was evidenced by the regular attendance of several big boys, whose behaviour for lads brought up as they have been was not only good during my visit, but is reported by the master to be excellent at all times. The schoolroom and its surroundings were clean and tidy, and the children clean and well behaved.

Mr. Nickless said that the attitude of both parents and children at Waikawa towards the school was a pleasing contrast to that assumed by people of Wanganui, where he conducted a school for some time. Here the school was valued; there it was despised: here it is difficult to keep the children away even on holidays; there it was difficult to get them to attend at all. The master pointed out that his salary was insufficient for his support, as he finds everything much dearer at Picton than at Wanganui. As the number of children attending the school is more than one teacher can properly attend to, his daughter, who has assisted him for some time past, might be allowed a salary for her services. Such an arrangement would meet all the requirements of the case. Mr. Nickless has enjoyed the advantage of being educated in a training college in England. He likes his work, and knows how to do it. It is gratifying to find that both he and his wife take a comprehensive view of their duty towards the community amongst whom they are placed.

Onuku: Master, Mr. A. G. Hamilton.—The schoolroom and master's house were erected by the Government at a cost of £300. The school was opened on the 1st January, 1880. It is largely attended by the European children in the neighbourhood, who outnumber the Maoris in the proportion of four to one.

Mangamaunu: Master, Mr. Thomas J. Danaher.—The schoolroom and master's house were erected by the Government at a cost of £400. The school was opened on the 1st January, 1880, and is attended by 24 scholars, ten boys and fourteen girls.

Wairewa: Master, Captain Curling.—Owing to the prevalence of fever, this school had to be closed for so many months during the past year that it was useless to hold a formal examination. Several of the pupils died of fever, many more left the neighbourhood altogether, and only a few have rejoined the school. It will be some time before the Natives recover from the panic into which they were thrown by the epidemic which so rapidly thinned their ranks, and till then we cannot expect a great increase in the number of scholars.

JAMES W. STARK.

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