

Peria.—Thirty-seven children were present at the inspection of this school. The results obtained were not quite as high as they had been the two previous years. This was owing to the fact that the school was just in the midst of one of those difficulties that occur from time to time in Native schools when most of the senior children have passed the higher standards, and a large proportion of the juniors have just completed the period at which they are called upon to go up for the First Standard. There has, however, been no falling-off in the general character of the work. This school has suffered a great loss during the year through the death of Hemi Kahoe, late Chairman of the Committee, who took great pride in the Peria School, and worked hard to promote its success.

Te Moari, Kaoo.—This school continues to be successful. Forty-six children were present at inspection: the majority of these answered well at the examination, the short time that the school has been in operation being considered. The master of this school works with a will, and, being, what one rarely meets, “a born teacher,” he never fails to make a good show at examination time. “Aptness to teach” is to the master of a primary school a far more valuable possession than the most accurate and extensive scholarship could be to him if he did not possess this aptness.

On the whole the results of the year's work in Mr Bishop's district can hardly be considered as more than fairly encouraging; but there is reason to hope for better things next year.

Bay of Islands

District Superintendent, Mr J. H. Greenway In this district there are five schools.

Mangakahia.—Fifteen children were present at the inspection of this school. Mangakahia is in a very isolated position, and is not suitable to any teacher that has not been used to a bush life. In fact the country is so rough and difficult of access from every side that the mere living here is, in the winter-time, in itself a hardship to a town man, to say nothing of his wife and family. The teacher that was here last year has accordingly been removed to a less secluded district, while another, who has no objection to being in the wilds, has taken his place. I think the change will prove satisfactory to both teachers. The falling-off in the attendance here is only temporary; it is owing to failure of crops and long-continued sickness.

Paihia.—This is a small subsidized school, only nine children were present at the inspection. The arrangement under which this school is subsidized appears to work well. A capitation grant is made on the average attendance, up to the number 15, the minimum attendance required for a village school. As soon as this number is reached the school becomes *ipso facto* a village school. If the average sinks, the capitation is again reverted to. Besides the stimulus thus brought to bear on the teacher through the character of the grant, there is the advantage that both teacher and Natives are urged to do their best to bring the attendance up to the number required to restore their school to its original standing. In this particular case, however, no such stimulus is required: the mistress takes great interest in her work, and produces very fair results.

Waikare.—This school has also had to be reduced to the rank of a subsidized school. The Natives here are very apathetic, or they might keep up a fair attendance. They have now a new teacher, it is to be hoped that they will do more for him than they did for the lady they had previously. At the last inspection ten children were present. With comparatively little trouble twice or three times that number might be got to attend.

Ohaewai.—Fifteen children were present at inspection. The Natives here do not take much interest in school matters. This is rather surprising, seeing that the chief is a well-informed and well-meaning Native, and that he has very considerable influence with his people. Perhaps it is owing to the proximity of a publichouse, which nearly always has a bad effect on a Native school, even when it is fairly well conducted, as this one happens to be. Any way, the teacher is not to blame for the small attendance. I feel sure that she does her very best for the children under her care, and that she is a skilful and energetic teacher. The examination results were very satisfactory.

Kaikohu.—Although inspection-day was very wet, fifty-eight children were present when the school opened. This is one of the schools that appear to me to satisfy all the requirements of the department most completely. There is really nothing in its management to find fault with, and there are many points connected with it that deserve special commendation. The very high percentage of 82.45 was obtained, and thirty-five complete passes were secured. If all Native schools were like this there would indeed be reason to feel hopeful about the future of the Maori race.

A few words of explanation may be advantageously given here with regard to the columns in Table No. 3 headed “Percentage obtained at Examination.” In the examination schedules there is a column for “Marks obtainable.” In this column a figure (3, 4, 5, or 6) is inserted opposite the name of each child that has attended at least half the number of times the school has been open during the previous six months. This figure represents the number of subjects in which the child must show sufficient knowledge in order to pass its standard. The total of these figures is then ascertained.

In the column headed “Marks obtained” there is set down, as each pupil's examination is finished, a figure corresponding to the number of subjects in which he has passed. Opposite the name of any absentee, whose absence is found on inquiry to be owing to causes over which the master has no control, is set a figure corresponding as nearly as may be to the average number of marks obtained by the children of the same class who are present, but below that number rather than above it. The total of marks obtained is then ascertained. This number, multiplied by 100 and divided by the “marks obtainable,” of course represents the percentage obtained at the examination.

I think that this method of obtaining percentages, though open to some objection on the ground that it is rather troublesome, and that it is, slightly, too favourable to a school that has an irregular attendance—seeing that there is a probability that the children absent on the examination-