

in remote Maori settlements will be quite a match for European pupils on the special ground of the latter.

But a very important element in the computation has been entirely omitted; against the very distinct superiority of European children over Maoris in reading, English composition, and writing from dictation, must be set the very cogent fact that the Maori children have, while acquiring what they know of these subjects, learnt also to understand and speak a foreign language with a facility that is often surprising. Those whose linguistic attainments extend to a knowledge of a second language at least will recognise the importance of this feature of Native-school work. Again, any one seeing even a Third-Standard class put through in "comprehension of what is read" would acknowledge that the children's grasp of the meaning and force of words and phrases is most satisfactory, and implies a degree and amount of intellectual culture—for that is the proper name of it—that goes far to compensate the sufficiently obvious deficiencies to which I have already referred.

But there is yet another side to the story, a side that is so paradoxical that it may seem to some untrue. It must be said that it is also unreasonable to expect that the *culture*, the *intellectual culture* gained by a Maori through his having been trained to express his thoughts in a foreign language will be found in a European child that knows no language but its own. Either this must be so or the whole theory of education that has prevailed in England for the last three hundred years must be false, root and branch. Any one who has followed the reasoning of these paragraphs with some care will have seen that the ready-made method by which people, who ought to know better but do not, seek to belittle our Native-school work is of no value whatever except for showing the onesidedness of those who use it. It seems, indeed, that it would be exceedingly difficult to make any trustworthy comparison where the elements are so complex and the conditions so diverse.

Of course the Native school characteristics dealt with above are very greatly modified in districts where English is commonly spoken. There the Maoris learn English in much the same way as they learn Maori; they "pick it up." And, no doubt, the public-school teachers of such Maori children would wonder what all the pother is about. "Difficulty in teaching Maori children," they would say; "surely there is none! Maoris learn just as readily as English children." And this is quite true. Yet if these teachers had to deal with children that never, or hardly ever, heard a word of English out of school, they would then feel the difficulty in full force. It is only necessary to add that in all probability Maori children who "pick up" enough English to give them a good start in an English school lose much of the *culture* that comes to children that learn our language more analytically, as in the more remote Native schools. Many would perhaps be inclined to smile at my use of the word "culture," but educationists will hardly do so.

The only true and just way of learning the value of our Fourth-Standard pass, and of Native-school work in general, is to perform some such experiment as the following: Inspect a dozen Fourth-Standard Maori boys and girls who have seen but little of Europeans and their ways except in connection with Native schools, and compare them with a dozen untaught Maori children of similar age and condition, thus letting the sole difference between the two groups be that the second dozen have not been to a Native school. No man or woman of candid mind who had once fairly seen or estimated *this difference* would ever again feel a doubt as to the utility of a good Native school, or could help feeling contempt either for the good faith or the judgment of those who, having had the opportunity of making such a comparison, maintain that the effect produced is in the main other than admirable. One need hardly hesitate to say that the difference would be recognised as that between educated, self-restraining, orderly, and capable children and a set of young savages pure and simple.

I have, &c.,  
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