

hardly ripe for a complete divorce from all consideration of results, and I must confess that after very much deliberation I incline to the latter, the suggestion of which is due to the late Inspector.

Such a method would involve (a) consideration of merit shown in each of the standard classes of the school, and the assigning of marks thereon by the Inspector according to the judgment he passes on the work as regards its merits and general effectiveness; and (b) consideration of general condition of the school as a whole, including records, state of premises, discipline, and methods. In fact, the bonus would be granted on what we now term the gross percentage of the school, instead of on the individual passes in standard classes. It follows as a matter of course that up to a certain standard, at any rate, the present method of individual examination would be abolished, and more freedom given to the teacher in the way of classification. This would enable more time to be given to examination of methods, which is very necessary in many of our schools.

The development of the Maori village schools and their increasing efficiency lead to the question that has often been asked in other connections—viz., what shall we do with our boys and girls?

At present there are two higher schools for boys and three for girls, while another school for girls is proposed. All of these institutions are established by various religious denominations—that is to say, there is, so far, no higher school of any kind conducted purely by the State. Boys or girls who pass the Fourth Standard at a village school may be awarded scholarships tenable at one of the institutions referred to. But there are now so many who qualify annually that it frequently happens that there is no room for all of them at the higher school to which they desire to go. There seems to be, therefore, a need for a revision of the conditions under which the scholarships are granted, and a simple way of surmounting the difficulty would be to raise the standard or to have a special examination of intending candidates. The Government also provides industrial scholarships or apprenticeships to such as choose them in lieu of the higher education, and there are already boys apprenticed to various trades under this arrangement. It is found somewhat difficult to procure suitable occupations under desirable masters, otherwise this scheme might be more extensively carried out than it is at present.

For girls a training that should be most beneficial to the race is that of nursing, and since 1898 the Government has had in operation a scheme of nursing scholarships. The recent developments in Maori affairs generally, and especially the efforts made by the Government to ameliorate the sanitary conditions of Maori villages, require, however, that the scheme shall be extended.

There can be no doubt that mortality amongst Maori children is, if not the greatest, at any rate an exceedingly great factor in reducing the numbers of Maoris in the colony. And the causes of this mortality are not far to seek; they are, indeed, patent to any one who moves amongst the people.

Could we but place in Maori districts trained nurses who would devote their time specially to the care of the women and children, I believe that many lives would be saved annually. There is, however, one great difficulty in the way of such a scheme, and this confronts us alike whether we take boys or girls from the kaainga in order to give them higher training, of any sort. The experience of the past has taught us that in most cases the Maori race receives little or no benefit from such training. In many instances the boys find that they can earn more money and live under better conditions in the town than in the kaainga; the girls that have had scholarships look out for chances of learning shorthand, dressmaking, &c., in order that they may not return to their homes, where all the surroundings are distasteful. A girl who has been partly trained as a nurse obtains a position on the regular staff of some hospital, and does not entertain the idea of working in the settlement whence she came. All these are, therefore, practically lost to their race, which is in this way deprived of the valuable aid it might have received. In this connection, Mr. Pope, in a report on one of our higher schools, remarks, "The lesson derivable is an obvious one. While it would be wrong and unfair, and perhaps disastrous, to change our policy—'to change horses in the middle of the stream'—we ought at once to increase our efforts to make the village schools more and more effective, so as to give Maoris remaining at home an ever-improving chance."

In the case of the girls, one must admit that under existing circumstances they cannot be blamed for their choice. A girl who has lived for two or three years at one of the secondary institutions, and has learned there to appreciate all the comforts of civilisation, must have a rude awakening when she finds herself back in the whare, where there are no comforts at all. She will probably struggle with her surroundings for a while, and then simply adapt herself to the new situation. When you are in Rome, you must do as Rome does. Some of the best girls from our higher schools have returned to the village only to be compelled there to take to the gumfields—the wilderness, as the Maori speaks of it. In less than a month you will recognise them only by their ability to speak English; possibly also by their clean faces. Of course, the gradual improvement of the race under the developments above referred to will minimise to some extent the difficulty; but unless there is found some goal to which our higher education system may lead we cannot be satisfied with the system. So long as there is no definite end, I believe that we are likely to make the mistake of giving higher education to too many.

The extension of manual training in our village schools, especially in carpentry, and perhaps in time agriculture, must be of great benefit to the boys, and for the majority of them such training—the training how to work—would be sufficient. This would leave more room for those who are specially gifted and desire to take up some profession. For the girls domestic economy in all its branches would be of the greatest utility; and for those who are best qualified a training as nurses or as pupil-teachers in our own village schools seems to me to afford the best means of enabling them to be of service to themselves and to their race. Only, in their cases, and those of the boys who are assisted by the Government to study for one of the professions, it should be clearly understood that the assistance is given only upon the condition that the knowledge and skill they acquire will be used among and for the benefit of their own people.

Some photographs giving an idea of Maori children and Maori schools are attached to this report.

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WILLIAM W. BIRD.