

In a few cases the supervision of the outbuildings was found by the Inspectors to be somewhat lacking. Regular daily inspection and care is necessary not only as a training in decent habits of health in the younger children, but also as an essential activity towards the maintenance of good health in the community.

The care and attention bestowed on the grounds in the different schools is reported as showing considerable variation. While many teachers take an enthusiastic interest in the development of play-ground facilities and in the improvement of the general appearance of the grounds, there are a few whose interest is almost negligible. In the majority of cases, however, the school-grounds are the pride and inspiration of the settlement. Particular mention is made by the Inspectors of the following schools: *Te Hapua, Whakarara, Otawa, Te Paroa Totara, Pamapurua, Te Kaha, Wharekahika, Tikitiki, Mangatuna, Rangiahua, Waimarama, Tangoio, Opoutere.*

#### SYLLABUS OF INSTRUCTION.

In keeping with the gradual advance in the standard of education, the new syllabus of instruction for primary schools is being introduced with some necessary modifications into the Native schools. While the cardinal subject of instruction in the primary school is the English language, in a Native school it is, of course, of pre-eminent importance, inasmuch as want of knowledge of the English language constitutes the greatest obstacle to be overcome by the teacher.

For many years past, English has been taught by the direct method, definite lessons being given from the earliest stages, while the Maori language is not used. Suggestions for the guidance of teachers in teaching English are provided in a special pamphlet on the subject, and it is surprising to note the success achieved in many schools where the children have come to school unable to speak a word of English.

#### CLEANLINESS AND HEALTH.

The Native schools still emphasize the importance of cleanliness and health, and the teachers give much gratuitous social service to the community in which they are placed. The importance of personal hygiene and the formation of good health habits are not neglected. It is only fitting that recognition should be given here to the assistance rendered in all health matters by the School Medical Officers of the Health Department, who have shown a particularly keen interest in the Maori child, and have rendered much valuable service in this important matter.

#### METHODS OF TEACHING.

Inspector D. G. Ball, who comes to the Native School Service direct from the work of organizing teacher in public schools, offers the following remarks on the methods of teaching in Native schools:—

“The methods of teaching employed in the lower division of the majority of the schools are intelligent and well applied. Here it is that the teachers are fully cognizant of the importance of oral teaching and practical application. A greater variety of teaching devices and the utilization of more home-made material, pictures, and games would result not only in increased interest and a brighter class-room atmosphere, but also in raising materially the standard of work.

“In many cases the methods employed in the standard classes are of a much less satisfactory nature. If teachers would give more preliminary thought to the ends actually attained by the use of their methods, more vital aims would emerge, thus necessitating more thoughtful methods. In many schools the methods in use are mechanical, inherited—without aim, purpose, or inspiration. Only by keeping professionally awake by discussion, reading, and thought, can one’s teaching ability remain vital. Teachers are well advised to subscribe to a modern educational journal, where the latest practices in teaching technique are discussed. Particularly uninspiring and lacking in any real purposive motivation are the methods commonly in use in teaching reading, recitation, arithmetic, and handwork.

“The pupils, when subjected to tests, show that in most cases they have been well grounded along certain definite lines, and that they have profited to that extent, but any departure from the standard test indicated, in the majority of cases, want of initiative and confidence. More modern methods would develop these characteristics.”

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

The opinions of the Inspectors (Messrs. G. M. Henderson, M.A., and D. G. Ball, B.A., LL.B.) in regard to the various subjects of the curriculum may be stated in the following extracts from their reports:—

##### *English.*

“*Oral Expression and Language Teaching.*—In practically all the schools oral English is now fairly efficiently taught in the primer class, though many teachers devote a great deal of time to the premature teaching of reading, which would be much better spent on speech-training. A good many teachers fail to realize the importance of continuing the oral-English training in the standard classes. This training should follow two main principles: (1) The expansion of the child’s knowledge of English and the enrichment of his means of expressing himself, and (2) the correction of errors and the forestalling of these errors which the experienced teacher knows the Maori child will make unless he is put through language drill in anticipation of the difficulties for the Polynesian, which the English language contains.

“In view of the large amount of time that must be spent in teaching oral and written English, it is not advisable that any ambitious schemes of work in either history or geography should be undertaken. It will therefore be necessary for teachers, when making out their programmes, to consider