

receive more children into these than the preparations made for their accommodation, support, and instruction, warranted. The consequence of which has been that the ultimate object aimed at has not been obtained.

A great difficulty in carrying on schools has been the want of efficient teachers. It must be borne in mind that a teacher to be efficient should be acquainted with the Maori language; and such persons are not readily obtained. Besides, the unpleasantness of many of the duties to be discharged in connection with the education and management of Native children deters many, otherwise well qualified, from engaging in the work. Again, hearty co-operation among the parties engaged in this work is absolutely necessary; and persons prepared so to act are not always available.

I believe an error was committed at Otaki when it was attempted to enforce among the Maori children too great a conformity to the practice of English schools. Order, regularity, cleanliness, &c., are so important in the management of schools that it is difficult to relax at all on these points. Still a somewhat lower standard might for a time be allowed, until prejudices are weakened and new habits acquired. I believe there are several schools in the Northern part of the island where such a system has been adopted, and where the result has been that the number of the scholars has been considerable, and their proficiency satisfactory. The experience acquired in connection with the institution will not be lost. All concerned in the management of it better understand what object should be aimed at, and what, under the present circumstances of the native race, is attainable. And the parents seem to perceive more clearly that it is absolutely necessary that their children should thoroughly conform to all the regulations of the school, if they are to derive any real benefit from it. The results are not wholly unsatisfactory. Not less than fifty boys have at various times left the school, who certainly have acquired considerable knowledge in the elementary parts of education, in the English language, in the management of sheep, cattle, &c., and in agriculture, and who have received religious instruction. Nearly the whole of these are now acting in a beneficial manner in their own villages and communities.

It is highly important that in commencing any future institution it should be clearly understood that every necessary preparation should be made before scholars are admitted into it. It has been found by experience unadvisable to combine the preliminary arrangements for bringing an institution into active operation with a system of education and training on any extensive scale. Any grant of money will be most advantageously expended in erecting necessary buildings, in fencing land and purchasing implements, &c., because the land by these means will more readily be rendered productive, and capable of affording support to the institution. Moreover the nature of the preliminary work is not suitable for boys, and is certainly distasteful to them; and habits of irregularity and feelings of discontent are engendered. And it is probable that the government will be looking for more progress and greater improvement in the scholars than under the circumstances may be possible or it may be right to expect. The preliminary buildings, fencing, &c., might be done by a contract under the direction of a managing committee. A master's salary would not be required during this stage of an institution.

The expense of these institutions is doubtless an important question for the consideration of the Government. But when it is remembered that there is an early prospect of their being self-supporting,—that they are intended to be so many centres from which education and a civilising influence should be imparted to the Native population generally,—that there are so few systematic means of doing this,—and that it becomes daily more important from the rapid increase of the English population among whom they live that this should be accomplished;—and further, that the operation, carried on in these, have, even now, a collateral influence very beneficial on the surrounding Natives; it can scarcely be said that the money expended is not promoting the objects aimed at, or that there is not a reasonable prospect of its eventually producing very adequate and satisfactory results.

In conclusion I must express my deep conviction that any scheme whose object is to effect a rapid alteration in the habits and customs of the Natives will prove abortive, and disappoint the anticipations of its authors. This does not arise from any backwardness on the part of the Natives to change, or from want of shrewdness in perceiving what would be to their advantage; perhaps few people have ever been known with less prejudice, or who have been less wedded to their customs. It arises simply from the inherent difficulty of speedily producing such a change in a people, recently one of the most savage, as will meet the wishes and expectations of colonists who have lately come from a nation which is one of the most civilised. Visible improvement from month to month, or even from year to year, is scarcely to be expected from the Native population at large. If such sudden improvement appeared to take place, it would be regarded as superficial: its reality or permanence would be very doubtful. If therefore any system for their improvement should, after due consideration, be deemed desirable, it ought to be persevered in, notwithstanding difficulties, for a sufficient period of time to allow of success: temporary failure should not cause the abandonment of a well-considered plan.

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