

During the past year, however, schools have been in operation in different parts of that European settlement, and I have frequently urged upon the Maoris to send their children, venturing to promise that the Government would pay the school fees. None, however, have been sent, although the schools were conveniently situated, and others might have been undertaken by the same teachers if the Maoris had shown any desire to have their children educated. I do not consider that Natives will put themselves about to have their children educated; most certainly they will not consent to send and pay also. As they have hitherto been accustomed to have them fed, lodged, clothed, and schooled free of charge to themselves, they will now be slow to perceive that education is better, more valuable, or more necessary to their children now than it has been when the Government and the missionaries earnestly solicited them to part with their children, and when they believed themselves to be under no obligation, but rather to be granting a favour by their thus patronizing the benevolent desires of the school promoters. In fact, when I look around me and see the apathy of my neighbour settlers who neglect to send their children to schools, either because they have not the money to pay, do not choose to pay it, or else have other employment for their untaught offspring, I cannot wonder at or blame the simple Natives for lack of a due appreciation of the benefits of a liberal education. It is a pity that the subdivision of affairs in the Colony should render it necessary for two separate Governments to provide two separate schemes of education—one for Maoris, and another for Europeans. I believe it would be better, and far more efficient as well as economical, were one scheme provided for the education of the children of both races. I do not think that any Government scheme should pander to the pride of race assumed by some ignorant colonists who are not equal, in manners, birth, wealth, intelligence, or gentlemanly feeling, to the majority of the Maori race. But compulsion or some other method must be had recourse to, to get both European and Maori children into school, for if they are allowed to grow up as at present and hitherto, no good to the State can come of them in after life. Perhaps if the Maoris had individualized Crown Grants their lands would be accessible to taxation for providing schools and teachers; but I do not think that Maoris, or, as a rule, that Europeans would agree to tax themselves for educational purposes. The tax must, therefore, not be simply permissive but compulsory, and laid on by the Legislature of the Province or Colony either on purpose, or else the expenses must be paid out of the revenue, whether raised from lands, stamps, customs, incomes, or any other source. Local authorities will not, I believe, carry out the necessary steps to have a good education provided in their several localities, and even if they would the education so produced, would be a piece of patchwork, and be destitute of the uniformity and stability which ought to be the characteristic of a national system of education.

No. 4.

Copy of a REPORT by Mr. EYTON on the Nazareth Institution, Three Kings Institution, and St. Stephen's School.

SIR,—

Auckland, 25th May, 1868.

I have the honor to forward herewith reports on the Nazareth Institution, Three Kings Institution, and St. Stephen's School.

With respect to the fourth establishment (St. Mary's College) which you instructed me to visit, I beg to inform you that I attended there on 20th May, and was refused admission by Mrs. McIlhone, wife of the manager, on the ground that the Rev. Father Macdonald, Vicar-General, had given orders that no Inspector should be admitted unless with his sanction, and producing a letter to that effect. As the rev. gentleman had been apprized of my appointment, and had acknowledged your letter informing him thereof, but made no allusion in his reply to the existence of these instructions to the Principal of St. Mary's, it appears to me that he must have somewhat mistaken his position with respect to the Government inspection of this school, and that he cannot be aware of the provision in clause twenty of the Native Schools Act, that the Inspector "shall have power to enter, inspect, and examine all schools receiving aid under the provisions of this Act." Whether this provision was or was not known to Father Macdonald makes little difference, except as regards the opinion which will be entertained of his courtesy. The practical result appears to be, that unless the school is thrown open at all times to the visits of a duly appointed Inspector, there is no other course to be followed but the withdrawal of the Government grant. I have had no communication with Father Macdonald on this matter.

It will be seen by the accompanying reports that none of the schools which I visited are in a flourishing financial condition, and that it is improbable that any one of them will continue in existence without an increased grant from the Government. I do not consider that good reason exists for increasing the allowance to schools of a denominational character; on the contrary, I should say that the fact of their being under the control of any one sect was at all times a sufficient reason against such increase, inasmuch as the religious character of the schools must act as a bar to their general use by Natives who may be under the guidance of a minister of a different persuasion to the school authorities. It is nevertheless highly desirable that Native education should be provided for in some manner; and unless the Government can see their way to doing this by a method less costly and more efficient than the present, it may be advisable as a provisional arrangement to keep some of these schools in existence until such time as an institution can be established having for its sole object the secular education of the Natives. There does not, however, appear to be any insurmountable difficulty to the immediate establishment of such a school. It does not seem very probable that the district school project will ever be adopted to any great extent by the Natives, as it calls for too much action and trouble on their part; consequently, of the sum annually appropriated for Native education but a small proportion will be applied to schools of this kind. Bearing this in mind, and also taking into consideration the unsatisfactory condition of the present schools in this neighbourhood, it appears to me that a favourable opportunity is now offered for the Government to step in and create, without doing any one an injustice, a Maori school, independent of all religious bodies, where the object of those who framed the Native Schools Act may be better attained than under the former system. In order to do this, a permissive clause would have to be added to the Act.