

and those of the Maori chairman, the parents are very backward in paying their dues, even after repeated demands made.

The Parikino School, I regret to say, has gone down, the number on the roll not exceeding 10, of whom about four attend regularly, chiefs' sons. I should have recommended this school being closed but for the request made by the chiefs Major Keepa and Mete Kingi, to keep it open till they had brought the matter under the consideration of the tribes interested therein, who will meet at Pūtiki next month, when affairs concerning the education of the Maori children will be fully discussed, and a decision come to respecting the Parikino School.

I am not at all sanguine as to the result, but think it better to leave the matter in abeyance, so that the Natives may have themselves alone to blame, should this school have to be permanently closed, and the teacher—a most deserving and able one—be removed to a more flourishing establishment, to which I can highly recommend him.

Hakaria and the resident Natives have broken their engagements respecting the school reserves of 137 acres, which they now decline to hand over to the Trustees for leasing purposes, having an eye to same as a pasture ground for their sheep. In this business there has been a breach of faith on the part of the chief Hakaria Korako and his people, which will not tend to their advantage. I must say that I look forward with gloomy anticipations as to the continued success of the Native village schools at Wanganui. The novelty has worn off, and there is not that disposition shown towards supporting these valuable institutions as there should be, notwithstanding the very liberal aid afforded by the Government of the country. I have done all I could to interest the Natives in their schools, and for some time with apparent success; but now the results are anything but encouraging.

On the 4th instant I held an examination of the Iruharama school children, there being about 30 in attendance, out of some 68 on the roll. Proceedings commenced by singing some of Sankey's sacred melodies, accompanied by the harmonium. All the children took part, and have much improved, the instrument being of great assistance in adding to the harmony and keeping of time. This service of song was most melodious, and it was pleasing to witness the delight and zeal with which the children, old and young, rendered the many tunes (some 40) they have learned. The effect cannot be other than elevating to the minds of both children and parents. The harmonium, which cost some £17, was purchased by subscription, £12 having been raised by the Natives and a few European friends, and the remainder by the Government. A similar instrument was procured in like manner for the Parikino School.

I then examined the whole school, taking them in classes. The nature of the examination was much the same as reported on in detail last year:—Subjects: Reading (English and Maori), geography with maps, arithmetic (mental and on slate), history (sacred and profane), tables, &c.; exhibition of penmanship; and specimens of knitting and sewing by the girls. Reading, out of Royal Readers, Phillips's Colonial Series, and Willie's First and Second English Book,—moderately well, with fair apprehension of meaning of words and sentences. Spelling fair, on the whole. In geography, good progress made, especially in map of New Zealand, the children having been taught to name and point out all the counties in both islands, besides the mountains, lakes, rivers, towns, &c., &c. In arithmetic, not so efficient as expected, owing to irregular attendance. Specimen of writing, in copies, good; of needlework, rather scanty, the children not being provided with material to work upon: that shown seemed neatly done;—are taught twice a week. Industrial training, *nil*, which is a mistake, such being of importance to well-being of race.

Instruction also given by means of wall-plates, pictures, and illustrated alphabet; black-boards and ball-frame also in use. Grounds not well kept, and much damaged owing to constant inroads of cattle and pigs, which Natives have undertaken to remedy and make good.

Appearance of children not so neat and tidy as I could have wished, with some exceptions, the fault that of their parents. Religious services are conducted by Mr. Donaldson, on Sunday afternoons, at which parents and children attend. The scholars can repeat the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments, in English and Maori. The singing is excellent, and reflects credit upon both instructor and pupils. Mr. Donaldson has done good service in dispensing medicines to the sick, who flock to him from all parts, far and near, for medical treatment. His labours in this matter are deserving of recognition, as much of his own time is taken up in ministering to the wants and necessities of the sick and dying. A large number of young children, from five to eight years of age, have been admitted to this school, and if they continue to attend will form good material to work upon, as they attend more regularly than the elder ones, and make more rapid and marked progress, considering their years, and seem to possess a greater facility for acquiring the English tongue. Some of these juveniles have been admitted for a short time free of charge by the Maori chairman and committee, which I did not oppose under the circumstances.

I stopped at Mr. Nickless's, Parikino School, on my way down, and had up the three boys—the only ones present—for examination. I attach Mr. Nickless's report and return, which speak for themselves. He is much discouraged, and would like to be removed to a more promising field of labour. I trust the Government will secure his services for some other Native school in this island, as he is a most competent teacher and has always taken a great interest in his duties, and it is owing to no fault of his that the Parikino School has failed of success.

I have introduced the system of economics in both schools, and several of the boys have availed themselves of the school bank as a depositary for their spare pence and shillings, one lad having already got some 30s. to his credit in the money-box.

At Iruharama I distributed a number of English illustrated reading-books amongst the most proficient and deserving of the scholars, who were all much delighted with their prizes.

I have, &c.,

The Under Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

RICHARD W. WOON,
Resident Magistrate, Upper Wanganui.