

and first classes respectively are transcribing from the primer, and writing words and figures from the black-board. This kind of arrangement can be carried on throughout the day, except when the pupils in Standard II. are reading; then it is necessary to provide separate silent work for three classes instead of two. It should be remembered that the lower classes, and especially the lowest, require very frequent supervision while doing silent work. The two senior classes may often be left almost to themselves until their silent work is finished, but the little ones should never be allowed to go on entirely alone for more than eight or ten minutes at the very outside; if they are, the result will be that they will become listless and inattentive and probably disorderly.

DISCIPLINE AND METHODS.

Last year's report contained rather lengthy remarks on these subjects; there is little to add this year.

It is but seldom that I have to report that the discipline of a school is unsatisfactory. In many of our schools it is very good indeed. Peria, Upper Waihou, Maketu, Rotoiti, Kaiapoi, Waikouaiti, Otago Heads, Colac, Whirinaki, and Waitapu, are all very satisfactory, and there are many others that are almost as good. The best discipline, including both order and tone, is to be found at Whakatane, which is in this respect a model school.

At schools where the "look-and-say" method of teaching reading has been adopted, expression and pronunciation have been greatly improved. In one or two cases, however, the teachers have *not* supplemented the instruction in reading by spelling lessons, and have not been careful to make the children know the *words* by sight. In these cases it appears to have been supposed that because a child can rattle off a sentence that he has heard repeated many times he can *read* it—an immense *non sequitur* this, as every teacher ought to know. The result has been that the First Standard pupils of these teachers have failed in reading at the standard examinations. Those teachers that have used this method with ordinary care and intelligence have had every reason to be satisfied with the results.

INSTRUCTION.

Table No. 3 in the Appendix shows the examination results of the instruction given in the Native schools during the year. The results for 1881, compared with those of 1880, are as follows:—

	1880.	1881.
Number of children examined	1,320	1,489
Passed Standard I.	412	241
Passed Standard II.	195	161
Passed Standard III.	70	65
Passed Standard IV.	13	25
Total passes	690	492
Total failures	630	997

But little importance, however, can be attached to this comparison, seeing that the results were obtained under very different circumstances. The results for 1880 represent, so to speak, the whole of the knowledge of the standard subjects possessed by the children at the time of the examination, a knowledge that in many cases it had taken several years to accumulate; those for 1881 show, as a rule, the amount of progress made in a single year. The case will be different next year, the results for 1882 compared with those for 1881 will show whether progress or retrogression is taking place.

A few remarks may be made with reference to the results obtained in each subject.

Reading.—Considerable improvement has taken place in the fluency and pronunciation of the reading. This is especially noticeable in the case of the younger children. Several teachers, too, have succeeded in teaching their pupils to read with expression; but generally there has not been enough effort put forth to do away with that monotony that is so characteristic of the reading in nearly all sorts and conditions of schools. This monotony is most offensive in the two lower classes. It is surely quite as easy to get children to say "This 'is a cat'" as to drawl out "This 'is a' cat'." Many teachers, however, seem to prefer the drawl, and allow their children to accustom themselves to use a jargon that they will have by-and-by, when they begin to learn to read English, to unlearn most carefully. Now, why should this be so? There is nothing that I know of to prevent the reading of Standard I. children from being as good of its kind as the reading of those in Standard IV. Children going up for the First Standard should, if they have been well taught, read nearly as well as those going up for Standard IV.; the only difference being that the elder pupils should be able to read a difficult book, while the little ones are expected only to read very easy sentences. In a few schools it is necessary that a great deal more attention should be bestowed on spelling than is now given to it. Comprehension continues to be very well taught in a few of the schools, and very fairly in nearly all the others.

Writing.—There is a vast difference between the writing in the best and in the worst of our schools, but the results in this subject have been on the whole very fair. They should have been excellent. Maoris have great natural aptitude for writing and drawing; a very little good teaching will nearly always make them write extremely well. Great harm is done by allowing the little ones to do what is called writing on their slates without any effective supervision, and letting them get into bad habits that it is almost impossible afterwards to get rid of. I would again advise teachers to read and lay to heart the instructions given in Vere Foster's copy-books.

English.—There has been very decided improvement in the teaching of this most important subject at nearly every school. The results have been very encouraging. I feel sure that it will be found that the boys and girls that go step by step through the Native school course will be able when they leave school to speak English, and that the "piki pakeha" of old times will soon be almost a lost dialect.

Arithmetic.—Here, too, decided improvement is very manifest, especially in the work of the juniors. The mental work of Standards I. and II. has often been found to be excellent. There is still room for improvement in the "easy-problem" work of Standard IV., and in the mental arithmetic for Standard III.