

“the gross percentage,” and on this percentage the relative positions of the individual schools for the year 1897 are made to depend. Table No. VIII. gives the classification of pupils on the school rolls in December, 1897. Table No. IX. shows the average age of pupils when passing the standard examinations in 1897. Table No. X. gives the numbers of pupils attending Native boarding-schools, and of ex-Native-school boys serving their apprenticeship at the close of the year.

MISCELLANEOUS.

This report is already long, and what follows must be as brief as possible; there are only four subjects that seem to require particular attention. These are as follows: (1) The question of giving girls from Hukarere and St. Joseph's Boarding-schools a certain amount of training as hospital nurses; (2) needlework for boys; (3) the writing of telegrams as an examination test; (4) the value of a Native school Fourth Standard pass.

Proposal to train Maori Girls as Nurses.

At a conference of old Te Aute boys, held at Te Aute College in February, 1897, it was suggested that much good would result from having trained nurses in Maori settlements. This proposal plainly had real value, but it seemed difficult to find a way of turning the thought into action. However, during a long and interesting conference with Mr. Hamiora Hei, early in July of the same year, ideas in regard to the matter took what seems to me practicable shape. It is unnecessary to state at length the various stages of the discussion; it will suffice to give, in a condensed form, the results that were arrived at; they are embodied in the following paragraph:—

The Department has constantly recognised the importance of directing the attention of the Maori race to the laws of health and to sanitary reform. It cannot well be doubted that much good has resulted; but, necessarily, the work has had an external character only. We have, to use a metaphor, applied blisters, stimulating lotions, and healing ointments, but no attempt has been made to secure action from within. The time has now come, it would seem, when internal remedies would do good. I propose to begin thus: Every year a number of our Maori girls pass a “second-year examination” at Napier. We Europeans, or some of us, may find it easy to pour contempt on this achievement, and to treat it as of little worth; yet when looked at in its true setting—its context—it is found to mean a very great advance. Not to enlarge on this point, it may be said at once that in these “second-year girls” we have material out of which to make most effective sanitary reformers; and this, it seems to me, is the way to begin the work. Let two of the most proficient and healthy of these scholars (one from Hukarere and one from St. Joseph's)—receive, after their final examination, a further scholarship at their respective schools, and let them be attached to the Napier Hospital as assistant nurses and dressers for a full year. At the end of the time they could be sent back to their settlements in the usual way, but now fitted to be efficient preachers of the gospel of health. This is the proposal in brief. I have limited the scheme as much as possible, but should hope that proved utility would soon cause it to assume much larger proportions. In any case, however, this plan would immediately cause to flow into Maori districts a life-giving stream of real sanitary knowledge, “small at the first; increasing every hour.” I am thankful to the Department for taking this scheme up and endeavouring to get it put into practice.

Instruction of Boys in Needlework.

A proposal has been made to the Department by Mr. H. B. Kirk, M.A., and myself, to the effect that boys shall be allowed to pass the examination in needlework, and that teachers shall receive increment to their salaries for passes so gained. The Department has adopted the proposal. The following statement contains the grounds on which the recommendation referred to was based: It is well known that nearly all classes of theoretical educationists are proposing, or are assenting to the proposal, that technical work shall form an important part of primary education. It would seem that the more purely “practical” thinkers hope that by this means young people will be advanced *so far* on the way towards learning a trade and getting a living. Those who take less superficial views of the subject probably hold that it is well for children to be made handy and self-helpful, so that they may be ready to meet and deal with the practical needs of life, and not to be helpless and helpless when something involving physical activity as well as mental process has *to be done*. Those who soar still higher will hold that a man should be able to “function” well not only with brain and nervous system, but also with eye, hand, and ear, in every way that may become a man. Those who to their speculative view have added practical physiological knowledge appear to have become convinced that the proper starting-point for all disciplines leading to this general “hability” lies well within the period devoted to primary education.

Also, it seems highly probable that women have, as a rule, far more general *deftness* than men have. It is true that this qualification sometimes strays over the line and exists very markedly in a man. But exceptions of this kind are of no force as against the general statement that women as a rule use hand and eye well, and men use them not so well. Of course it is possible to account for this puzzling fact by saying that women were made *just so*, and that there the matter ends. Most people, however, would prefer to seek out a phenomenal antecedent of the phenomenon, and would not be quite satisfied with a regression to the First Cause in a merely scientific discussion. When once one sets out to find the agency that has brought about the difference referred to, he is impelled to believe that it is in some way connected with difference in the modes of life of the two sexes. In the end it is found difficult to avoid coming to the conclusion that the cause of woman's superiority to man in deftness, neatness, power of observation, skill in making elegant arrangements, and in general *savoir faire* with regard to what is proper, is *the exercise* of an hereditary gift—one that has been successively added to and handed on to succeeding generations. The *main* cause of this, it is found, has been a custom—the custom of civilised and semi-civilised races that