

hands over to women most kinds of household work, and that decrees more especially that women should do nearly all, if not quite all, the needlework that is required in connection with the house, with themselves, and with their children. We may look upon this view as being no mere hypothesis, but as a theory already fully verified by experience. It is, perhaps, not to be wondered at that those who hold this view should be anxious to let boys, whose parents do not object, have the full benefit of such a potent kind of training—a training that shall develop the powers that are, no doubt, latent in boys by heredity as well as in girls. Of course there is not the least desire to underrate work in wood, brick, stone, or iron; but industries of that kind would probably be far too expensive to introduce into our Native schools, even if there were not reason to fear that it would be unmanageable. But we have ready to hand, in our sewing-classes, what is, in accordance with the views just set forth at all events, an excellent source and means of technical training in full working order. I may add that to give a boy the complete four-years' course of needlework would cost the state just £1 6s. 8d. It would undoubtedly be well worth the money.

The Writing of Telegrams as an Examination Test.

For some time past it has seemed to me that our Fourth Standard tests of proficiency in English are not quite satisfactory. The four tests now in use are,—(1.) The translation of easy Maori sentences into good English. (2.) The correction of faulty, or "pidgin," English. (3.) The writing of letters on given subjects. (4.) The reproduction of short stories. These tests are all useful in their way, but they leave something to be desired. Not one of them assists in developing a good style; not one of them necessarily points the way to terseness, lucidity, and exactness, which qualities I assume to be the marks of a serviceable style. For instance, the correction of a faulty sentence may leave on our hands a statement that is not ungrammatical, and yet is neither terse, lucid, nor exact. A search for a test which, if regularly used, would tend to give the English composition of our Maori pupils the valuable characteristics referred to, has led to the surmise that the writing of telegrams may be the test required.

The advantages that I am disposed to claim for this kind of test are,—(1.) It is very definite; two or three facts could be roughly stated on the blackboard; verbal explanations could be given, and then the pupils could be set to work to construct forthwith a telegram that should correctly convey the required meaning in the smallest number of words. (2.) The application of the test would occupy but little time, and the value of the results could be readily appraised. (3.) The writing of telegrams would give pupils most valuable training in the art of finding out the exact purport of a group of statements, and of expressing this meaning in the briefest, clearest, and most correct way.

I have taken the liberty of introducing this subject here in order to get the proposal discussed by our teachers, seeing that they all receive copies of these reports. It may be hoped besides that the subject will be found to have a more general interest. It is, however, not very likely that the proposal is altogether new, although it has never been met with by the writer. It is not proposed to do away altogether with the tests now in use; but these should be made subsidiary and subordinate. The giving out, now and again, of a story for reproduction, for instance, would serve to show what kind of effect the new kind of training was producing on the pupils' power of composing; similarly with the writing of letters on given subjects. It is, one may suppose, hardly necessary to insist on the practical value of the ability to write a good telegram. And it might perhaps be worth while to remember also that this would carry with it the ability to write a most useful kind of letter—a letter that should be at the same time brief, clear, and adequate.

What is the Value of a Native School Fourth Standard Pass?

In view of the misconceptions which appear to prevail in some quarters with regard to this question, it is probably worth while to attempt to find an answer to it—an answer that shall be in the main true, and not a mere expression of ignorance, thoughtlessness, or malevolence. What follows is an attempt to make an estimate, as carefully as may be, of the amount of culture implied in the expression, "Native school Fourth Standard pass." I am persuaded that this cannot be done by the method on which much reliance has been placed, of comparing a Native-school pass with a public-school pass of similar or lower name. Of course, this method has the advantage of being extremely simple, and it is, perhaps, not entirely unsuited to the capacity of those who attempt to make use of it; but it is altogether misleading. The fact is that the two standards are not commensurable. Let us see what arguments may be advanced in support of this view.

It ought to be cheerfully admitted that the average public-school Fourth-Standard boy can read English much better than the average Fourth-Standard Maori boy; the latter's reading is often distinctly disappointing, especially when heard for the first time. It is quite true also that the dictation work of the Maori boy is apt to contain curious mistakes, such as "goward" for "coward" and "treaming" for "dreaming," and to be, on the whole, very distinctly below that of a public-school boy of the same nominal rank. Further, it is quite true that the English composition of the pakeha child is better, generally very considerably better, than that of the Maori. Just here the Maori disadvantage seems to end. The arithmetic of a Fourth-Standard Maori is, I believe, quite as good as that of a Fourth-Standard European; the geography and the elementary knowledge of sanitary laws are certainly not worse. Neither is the singing. The drawing is sometimes, but not always, meritorious. The needlework is nearly always good.

The fact is that when dealing with reading, dictation, and English composition in a Maori district we are face to face with the great difficulty of Native-school work—*Hic labor; hoc opus*. In some of our best schools such difficulties are got over, to a very large extent, by sheer toil on the part of the teachers; even in schools that are not so successful a very large amount of good and useful work is bestowed on these difficulties, to the immense advantage of the pupils. But, in any case, it is unreasonable and unfair to expect that children trained under such conditions as obtain