

presence in the training colleges is also creating an interest among the other students in Maori songs, dances, arts and crafts, language, and history. Whereas formerly the junior assistant's position was regarded as a means mainly for temporary employment, it is now regarded as a stepping-stone to training college, and most junior assistants are taking courses of study, through the Department's Correspondence School, with that object in view.

2. REFRESHER COURSE FOR TEACHERS

Perhaps the outstanding event in 1945 was the refresher course for Native-school teachers held at Kaikohe from 16th to 20th April. Over two hundred teachers attended, and it is a great tribute to their enthusiasm that only one school in the North Auckland district was not represented. The military hospital was used for the accommodation of the Native-school teachers and their families, and this proved to be a great boon not only in providing accommodation, but also in building up a strong fraternal spirit among the teachers. The local executive was consulted in the compilation of the course, and I should like to express my appreciation of the tremendous amount of thought and work these teachers gave to the organization of the course, and in making it such a success.

The days were very full ones, commencing with physical drill at 8.45 every morning, and closing with the open forum at 4.15 every afternoon. Plenty of options were provided, thus ensuring that teachers would have the opportunity of receiving expert advice on any subjects in which they had a special interest. I desire to express my thanks to the lecturers for the thought and preparation which they had so obviously put into their work.

3. NATIVE SCHOOLS AND THE WAR

Now that the war has ended it may be opportune to review the effects it has had on our schools. They have, in common with all other schools, suffered from shortages and from the absence of the soldier teachers, but, in my opinion, the Maori people took a greater interest and pride in the operations and welfare of the Maori Battalion in particular than other sections of the community. They were willing to make any sacrifice from their limited resources if it was for the benefit of their soldiers. In 1941 I felt that our schools should make some contribution, and I appealed to our schools for £600 to equip the Maori Battalion with a mobile canteen. In a very short space of time more than £900 had been donated, and few schools failed to contribute. The result was that we were able not only to buy the mobile canteen, but also to equip it, and on 19th August, 1941, it was officially handed over by the Hon. the Minister of Education to the Governor-General, as Chairman of the National Patriotic Fund Board. It was presented "as a token of love from the children of the Native Schools in New Zealand." The mobile canteen was with the Maori Battalion throughout the North African and Italian campaigns, and gave wonderful service.

The war also made its call on the teachers. The men were called away, and the women had to carry on. A large number of teachers on the staffs of the Native schools served overseas, and six made the supreme sacrifice. Of these six, five were young Maori men. The six were Patrick Farren, Pat Mete Kingi, Pango Munro, John Pile, John Rogers, and Joseph Urlich. To their relatives I desire to offer the sympathy of the Native School Inspectors and staff.

Other teachers served with the home Forces, while others, in addition to their teaching duties, gave valuable service in the Home Guard, many of them holding very important posts. The shortage of men teachers threw a great strain on the women teachers, who deserve every credit for the manner in which they carried out their extra responsibilities. There were also inevitable shortages in materials, but in spite of these difficulties the Native Schools Service functioned efficiently.