

J. H. Dennehy : " Agriculture for Seniors."
 H. A. Savage : " Maori Carving."
 Mr. Day : " Music for Seniors."
 R. H. Haesler : " Sketching."
 R. R. Judd : " Poultry-keeping."
 Mrs. M. Judd : " Domestic Crafts."
 R. H. Hawthorne : " The School Farm."
 L. M. Stewart : " Handwork for Boys."
 Mrs. Fricker : " Women's Institutes."
 Miss Small : " The Junior Red Cross."

I desire to express my thanks to the various speakers for the thought and preparation given to their addresses and for the help they gave to the teachers. Particular reference is due to Mr. Banner, whose death last year was a great shock to all. Both at Kaikohe and at Rotorua he had handled the subject of arithmetic with outstanding skill and an abundance of good humour.

3. PRIMARY EDUCATION

While the functions of Native schools cannot be confined to school work alone, nevertheless it is expected that academic results should reach as high a standard as possible. This has been stressed in all conferences with teachers, of which several were held during the year, and at refresher courses. Consequently, the Inspectorate has closely watched the progress of the basic subjects as well as those which have to be specially adapted to Native schools.

We have continually stressed that both the subject-matter and the method of presentation should be made as interesting as possible to the child, preferably by giving him a very active share in his own instruction. Wherever such aspects of education are fully considered we find a brightness and a confidence in the children that are reflected in the excellence of their work. Such conditions are by no means universal, but there is a growing tendency for Native-school teachers to depart from the old orthodox lecture type of instruction. This is to be seen more often in the infant-room perhaps than in the standard classes, owing to the fact that more material suitable for the new teaching methods is available and has been demonstrated by the Infant Advisers in their visits to our schools.

Yet even in the infant-room, in such a subject as reading, there is too much reliance on text-books, to the neglect of the most effective material—the teacher's own black-board and self-prepared reading matter. It must be admitted that the primer readers, as supplied to the schools, have serious deficiencies, but so far there is nothing better available to supplant them as text-books. They were not written for Maori children, and contain words that are unnecessary for a Maori child's vocabulary. The need is all the greater, therefore, to supplement these books by suitable reading material. A study of the words needed by the Maori child should be one of the first points to be considered. It is necessary to provide for a steady expansion of his reading vocabulary, while at the same time there should be regular drill and consolidation of words already assimilated. Last year about £250 worth of supplementary readers was issued to Native schools.

In the standard classes we find the same tendency to rely upon text-books in the teaching of arithmetic. The new text-books issued in 1945 are much superior to their predecessors, as they stress the value of practical exercises as well as mechanical accuracy. Some teachers still seem to consider it necessary to work strictly through all examples and exercises set out in the books, with a resultant slowing down of progress and an incomplete coverage of the year's work. Nevertheless, we are able to report a much more enlightened handling of this subject and an improvement in the attitude of both teachers and pupils towards it.

In English we are concerned with two important phases—oral and written. Both are essential to the Maori if he is to be capable of taking his place in a society that is