

Table No. 6: The increase in the number of passes last year was only three. This shows that there has been a tendency on the part of examiners to be somewhat more exacting—probably in the matter of oral English and arithmetic. The pressure has been mainly on Standard III. Even when no account is taken of the largely increased general attendance, the falling-off from last year's number of passes in this standard is represented by a percentage of 18.56. This probably means in the end that in the previous year there had been some lack of strictness in demanding from Standard II. classes a quality of work that would enable the average child to pass the Third Standard with reasonable facility at the succeeding examination. The six schools that gained the highest number of marks for passes were Rangitukia, Pamoana, Waimana, Tokaanu, Tokomaru Bay, and Ruatoki—in this order.

Table No. 7 is a very useful one; it shows best of all (1) what kind of "form" a school has—good, bad, or indifferent—and (2) what amount of success it has achieved. It has one defect: it takes, and can take, little or no account of the difficulties met with in the course of the year.

Table No. 8 shows the number of children in each class at the end of the year.

Table No. 9 gives the average age of children at the time of passing the standards. Comparison of such ages at the present time with the ages seven years ago shows that in the three lower standards the ages for 1902 are just as they were for 1895; in the other standards there is some divergence.

Table No. 10: We learn from this table that there were sixty-eight Government pupils in the boarding-schools in 1902, as against seventy-eight at the end of 1901. The number of private pupils was 169, including Europeans and quarter-castes. Five boys were holding industrial scholarships at the end of 1902, viz., two as saddlers, one as coachbuilder, one as printer, and one as blacksmith. Two girls were holding nursing scholarships at Napier Hospital—one from St. Joseph's, and one from Hukarere. There were two public-school scholars holding scholarships—one (boy) from Nelson Central Public School, at Te Aute College, Hawke's Bay, and one (girl) from St. Patrick's Convent, Auckland, at Auckland Grammar School. There were also two medical students (male) at the Otago University.

MR. H. B. KIRK, M.A., LATE INSPECTOR OF NATIVE SCHOOLS.

It is not easy to give an adequate idea of the loss suffered by our schools through the departure of Mr. Kirk for another sphere of labour; such an idea could not be expressed without a very lengthy statement of the services he has rendered to those schools and to the staff that works them. Of course this gentleman needs no commendation from us, but it would certainly leave us all with a very uncomfortable feeling if no word of friendly official farewell were said to him on his departure. I venture to say this word, with very best wishes for his future prosperity; also to add one remark: It is quite possible that some of those who know little of our late colleague may consider him rather fortunate; we who do know him, according to our lights, feel sure that the good fortune lies quite with Victoria College, and many of us venture to prophesy that the truth of this will become more and more manifest as the years roll by.

THE ART OF TEACHING IN NATIVE SCHOOLS: SOME OF ITS DEVELOPMENTS.

Native-school teaching is to-day very different from what it was in 1880. At that time nearly all who were connected with the work were "in the same boat"; the sole essential difference was that some of us earnestly desired to know how Maoris ought to be taught, while others were well content if their work was honestly done to the best of their ability, and was good enough to pass muster with the Department. At that time no one could know very much about the principles underlying the work then in hand. One had picked up one useful device and another another, but, as there had been but little communication between teacher and teacher, or between teachers and their Department (Native), there was really no knowledge common to or accessible for all. Good—that is, honest—work had certainly been done, but it was hardly the kind of work that is now considered satisfactory. An attempt will here be made to give a clear idea of present aims and principles, in the form of more or less connected paragraphs concerning the various subjects dealt with in our schools.

English.—What was being done in 1880 with regard to this—the most important of any of our subjects, and the indispensable requisite for success in teaching Maori children—was to teach it through, and by means of, the Maori, or else to leave it as a thing to be "picked up." It is needless to say that what was picked up was not English, but "piki pakeha." Teaching English through the Maori greatly resembles the task that secondary-school teachers used to set themselves of teaching French or Latin through and by means of English, and not in the way that they, in common with parents and nurses, taught English—namely, through English itself. Indeed, those of us who have reached middle life, and especially those who have long ago passed it, will remember that many great educational authorities even believed that English could be better taught through Latin, or through Latin and Greek, than in any other way. Those who had reached this strange conclusion had done so with the aid of the well-known fallacy that when two things frequently come together there must be some causal connection between them. It is true that classical scholars have very often been good English scholars, but it is not on any record worth attending to that any great master of English has become so in any intelligible sense by travelling on the road of Henry's First Latin Book, Latin verses, and English-Latin translation. It is not going too far to say that all masters of English have become so by travelling the English road of English conversation, English reading, and English composition.

It is not maintained that the work of translating Maori into English is not beneficial to young Maoris that have made some considerable advance in the foreign tongue; such work must always be of use, but it can come in only at a late stage—at the stage, that is, when considerable mastery of English has already been acquired. Year by year and almost day by day it has become more certain that the best and only way of learning conversational English is through conversation itself.