

lasting than brass. It is not too much to say that his memory will ever be held in veneration by the noble race in whose cause he has laboured so faithfully and well, by the teachers whose interests and well-being he has always so carefully guarded and thoughtfully provided for, and by the Department where for so many years he has been so highly esteemed, and where his loss will be very much regretted by all who have had the honour of being associated with him.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAORI EDUCATION.

The history of Native schools generally has fallen, so far, into two epochs. The first, under the Native Department, extended up to the year 1880. Whatever were the defects of the system under the first *régime*, it must be given the credit of having been the pioneer of the system that we see in force to-day. And there were many amongst the ranks of the first Native-school teachers who, though they may have lacked the more scientific methods of our best modern teachers, made for themselves as efficient instructors of the young Maori a name that exists now, long after some of these old teachers have departed.

The work of organizing the system and placing it on a new basis was intrusted to Mr. J. H. Pope, and he has been for the past twenty-five years the central figure in Maori-school life. The Native School Code introduced by him set a definite course of instruction for the teachers to follow. Improvements have been made on this Code from time to time as they have been rendered necessary by the evolution of the schools; but of late years so much advance has been made in the work that it seems very necessary that a new Code to keep up with the demands of the schools must be prepared at a very early date. Especially have changes been made in English, which under the more modern methods of teaching has become much stronger. The teachers have been directed, or trained, if necessary, to teach English on modern lines, and they know generally the requirements of the Department in this direction. The present edition of the Code may be said to be fairly out of date both as to the requirements in and the methods of teaching English. In short, the schools are in this as well as in other subjects in advance of the Code.

It is therefore desirable that a definite course in English shall now be arranged on some such lines as are followed by the majority of our teachers, who have adopted the methods which have been indicated by the Inspectors. As all future progress depends on the thorough treatment of English, the lowest classes, from the first preparatory class, should therefore receive the fullest attention in that subject. Indeed, if teachers would only recognise the fact, much more success may be achieved here than in the higher classes, where the memory of the pupils is not so plastic. It seems hardly possible to get at the very first a conversational lesson in which the children themselves are the interlocutors, however desirable such an end might seem. The teacher must direct the conversation, and when interest begins to flag all his ingenuity will be required to lead the children to new forms. The originality and versatility of the teacher are thus important factors in this method of teaching, and a teacher lacking in such powers will find English a difficult lesson to teach. There would be little difficulty in arranging a carefully graded scheme of English on these lines for the children of the preparatory classes and the first three standards. It is practically in existence in the schools at the present time. In many of the schools one finds the pupils of Class S2 able not only to take an intelligent part in a conversation in English, but also to write on their slates the substance of the conversation. In Standard III. the children should be able to use all the various forms of simple sentences in so far as they can be readily understood or used in question or statement. The children of Standard IV. would then be able to proceed to compound sentences, and very easy complex sentences might be taken. In Standards V. and VI. the children may fairly be considered to be familiar with any ordinary sentences. No grammar, as such, should form any part in the instruction in our schools; synthesis of sentences and perhaps a little analysis would be found useful in the higher classes, and exercises in the combination of simple sentences to form compound sentences might be taken in Standard IV., or even in Standard III.

Closely connected with the work of spoken English is the other branch of the subject, written English, which brings in the art of writing, and the representation of the words used in speech by its means. It is generally agreed that the old method of teaching writing by means of "pot-hooks" and "hangers" has deserved its fate, and that writing should be taught not by taking parts of letters, but by taking the whole letter, and in combination with other letters forming a word. It would not be difficult for the teacher who has been giving instruction to a young class in English to have his lesson followed by a lesson in writing. He could then choose for his subject the word most familiar to the children through their recent conversation. They will thus soon learn to affect a junction between the written and the spoken language, and the meaning of the words written will be known to them.

But another difficulty presents itself here. The children in writing use one form of letter; in reading they must use another. The question is, therefore, whether the children should be accustomed from the first to printed matter or script only. It has been held by competent authorities that the latter alternative is the correct one to adopt. The late Inspector of Native Schools, in a memorandum on the subject, states, "We find that if children learn to speak English sentences they will infallibly learn to read them. This tells us quite plainly that children ought to begin with script—copying blackboard script, and not printed matter. Indeed, experience has shown that for the first year script alone should be used." It may be pointed out, however, that there is, after all, very little real difference between the form of the printed letters and script, and a little careful work on the part of the teacher will insure the recognition of the resemblance, so that even if the child learns first to *read* print he will have not so very much trouble in *writing* script almost at the same time. The most important point is, I think, that whole words or combinations of letters should be insisted on.

There has been lately also considerable advance in the work of arithmetic, and when one considers both the inherent difficulties of the subject and the fact that knowledge of English affects