

generally that wherever the teacher uses an organ or other instrument to “help” the singing poor results are obtained, due, no doubt, to the fact that correct methods of teaching singing have been neglected. An intelligent grasp of the sol-fa notation and the teaching of songs from well-graded books, such as those now supplied, have done much to improve the quality of the singing in our schools, and these means can never be replaced by the use of any instrument. As a result of this training, most of the pupils who pass out of our schools are tolerably well acquainted with the sol-fa notation, being able to sing at sight with commendable precision, and choirs composed of these ex-pupils can sing part-songs, hymns, glees, and anthems with surprising skill and charming expression.

NEW SYLLABUS.

The compilation of the regulations relating to Native schools was completed during the year 1909, and the new regulations have for some time been in the hands of teachers. The schools are now examined and inspected according to these revised regulations, though we have found that so far the teachers have not generally availed themselves of the right to classify their pupils, but have preferred to leave the matter to the Inspector. It must be remembered that the examination of the pupils by the teachers themselves involves a considerable amount of work, but we have no doubt that the holding of periodical examinations will be of much service to the schools generally by showing the teachers and pupils where their weaknesses lie.

In the schools where the examinations have been duly carried out, we find a tendency on the part of the teachers to assign higher marks than we ourselves should give. It is not uncommon to find, for instance, full marks awarded for reading—a subject in which, from the nature of the case, excellence is not frequently attained in Native schools. Unless this tendency is carefully watched, teachers will find that the standard of proficiency on which their promotions have been made is too low, and this will have a serious effect when the pupils reach the higher classes. We strongly advise teachers, therefore, to exercise the greatest care in allotting marks for efficiency, especially in English subjects and arithmetic.

Generally speaking, it is very desirable that both teachers and assistants should make themselves thoroughly familiar with the regulations as soon as possible, and every member of the staff should have a copy available in the school. We not uncommonly find not only assistants but also head teachers who are not aware of the provisions of the regulations under which they work, with regard not only to the syllabus, but also to the general conditions. Hence it arises that the instructions and suggestions as to methods are frequently ignored.

The drawing-up of schemes of work is a matter that must receive much greater attention. We find that some teachers are not clear as to what is required; others present schemes much too extensive in character; while others think the best way is to leave it to the Inspector. The drawing-up of a scheme of work for a quarter involves a careful review by the teacher of the work prescribed by the syllabus, and so gives occasion for a greater amount of consideration of what is required and how it shall be taught. Moreover, it brings the head teacher of a school more directly into touch with the assistants, whose work not infrequently receives too little attention and direction from him. Above all, it tends to make teachers think about their work before they proceed to teach it, and anything that will foster the preparation of the work beforehand will certainly have a far-reaching effect on the teaching generally. For we are convinced that many of our teachers fall into the error of thinking that a successful lesson may be given on the spur of the moment, without preparation. Those teachers who achieve most success, and whose schools consequently rank highest in point of efficiency, we know to be the most assiduous in arranging their work and preparing their lessons beforehand.

In dealing with this matter, it seems desirable that we should make some reference to those schools where Maori girls are acting as assistants. We find that, as a rule, the Maori girl, like many of her European *compères*, lacks initiative and originality. If, therefore, she is placed in charge of a division, and is expected without further ado to blossom forth as a capable teacher, she is almost certain to prove a failure. And more than that, she has become disheartened before she has failed. The girls who are appointed to our schools after they have completed their course at one of the secondary schools have many accomplishments which should make them useful additions to the staff. For instance, they are quite capable of taking a large part in the singing, sewing, and physical instruction—a fact which we found is frequently overlooked by the head teacher. With regard to the actual teaching, of course, they require to be shown how to proceed, and where this has been done we are certain that the head teachers, almost without exception, have found that the Maori girl makes a satisfactory junior assistant. Speaking from our own observation, we have no hesitation in saying that some of the most competent assistants in the service are Maori girls, the whole of whose knowledge of teaching has been derived from instructions given them either by their head teachers or by ourselves.

MISSION SCHOOLS.

There are six mission schools engaged in the education of Maori children, which are inspected and examined by officers of the Department. These are the Maori Mission School, Otaki; the Mission School, Putiki, Wanganui; Matata Convent School, Bay of Plenty; Tokaanu Convent School, Tokaanu; Ngongotaha Mission School, Rotorua; and Te Hauke Mission School, Hawke's Bay.

The total number of children on the rolls of these schools at the end of the year 1909 was 231, the average attendance being 187.

The standard of efficiency reached by these schools has been well maintained, and they all compare very favourably with the ordinary Native school in this respect. The attendance in most of them is below the average, which, in view of the work done by the teachers, not only in the school but also among the people, is much to be regretted. The reorganization of the Maori Mission School at Otaki,