

number of pupils over fifteen years of age is decreasing, because such pupils seldom do much good at a village school. It is not quite so certain that the diminution of the percentage of children under five is an advantage; young Maoris can hardly begin to learn English too soon. It would be well, however, to make it a rule that none *but* Maoris or Maori quarter-castes should be put on the roll till they are over five. Seven would be a good lower limit for Europeans.

Table No. 4 gives statistics of attendance during the year. It will be noticed that the number of children belonging to the schools at the end of 1885 was 2,161, as against 2,226 at the corresponding time in 1884. I am afraid that no other cause can be assigned for this than the falling-off in the number of children really available. Fever and other diseases carry off Maori children through the insanitary conditions in which they live, while European children are able to pass through the same sort of ordeal comparatively unscathed.

Table B, compiled from Table 4 and similar tables of former years, shows the working averages for previous years. It will be seen that these figures are of a satisfactory character.

TABLE B.—ATTENDANCE.

Average of last quarter of 1879	..	..	..	..	1072
Working average of 1880	..	..	..	..	1239·75
”	”	1881	..	..	1562·25
”	”	1882	..	..	1648·25
”	”	1883	..	..	1583·25
”	”	1884	..	..	1811·50
”	”	1885	..	..	1831·83

Statistics showing how the children attending Native schools may be classified with reference to the race to which they belong are given in Table V. Some results derivable from this and similar tables of previous years are summarised in Tables C and D.

TABLE C.—RACE.

	Percentages.						
	1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	
Maori and between Maori and half-caste	..	76·46	76·77	74·16	71·81	72·69	71·13
Half-caste	..	9·61	10·10	10·28	10·30	9·70	10·50
Between half-caste and European	..	13·93	13·13	15·56	17·89	17·61	18·37

The results in this table are entitled to only limited reliance: they are vitiated to some extent by the fact that a rigorous classification of the children is more and more insisted upon. In the earlier years it was the practice to call any child a Maori who was living with the Maoris, while any European child with a trace of Maori blood was called a half-caste. Still there seems to be a well-defined tendency for the attendance to become more European. This will probably be corrected by the process, which has already been commenced, of handing over Europeanised schools to the Boards.

TABLE D.—SEX of MAORIS and MAORI QUARTER-CASTES attending NATIVE SCHOOLS.

	1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	
Male	..	56·94	58·00	56·31	56·84	56·79	57·84
Female	..	43·06	42·00	43·69	43·16	43·21	42·16

From this it appears that very little change has taken place in the ratio of the numbers of the two sexes. The excess of boys may, to some extent, be owing to an absolute excess of births of males; but, no doubt, the opinion prevalent amongst the Maoris that, while education is necessary for boys, it is of little use to girls, has very much to do with it.

Table No. 6 shows the number of passes in each standard for 1885, and Table E gives a summary of results obtained since standard examinations were begun in Native schools.

TABLE E.—EXAMINATION RESULTS.

	Total.	Stand. IV.	Stand. III.	Stand. II.	Stand. I.	
1880	..	690	13	70	195	412
1881	..	492	25	65	161	241
1882	..	519	29	81	146	263
1883	..	541	45	77	151	268
1884	..	526	56	58	156	256
1885	..	648	41	109	216	282

Bearing in mind that the results obtained in 1880 were the accumulated products of several years' work, we see from this table that the progress made has been, on the whole, continuous and satisfactory. It is right to mention, too, that the standards are now much higher than they were in 1880, and that a pupil who would have passed in English then would now be sent back as a bad failure.