

For some time past the attendance at Native schools has been declining, while the efficiency of the teachers has been increasing. The payments to the teachers under the Native School Code of 1886 were made to depend much more on efficiency than on average attendance, with the result that the capitation cost came at last to be unjustifiably high. A new code has therefore been issued, which took effect at the beginning of April, 1893, and which establishes a close relation between attendance and cost. It is computed that under the new code the total of the salaries of Native-school teachers will be reduced by more than £2,000.

The teachers receiving salary in the December quarter were—58 masters with salaries ranging between £205 and £51; 9 mistresses (£175 to £52 10s.); 21 assistants (£55 to £10); and 36 sewing-mistresses (at £20).

The number of children on the rolls of the 67 schools in December was 2,113, the average roll-number for the year being 2,218. The average attendance for the December quarter was 1,623, and for the whole year 1,634. The average attendance for the year is 73·7 per cent. of the average roll-number for the year.

The Maori children were 73 per cent. of the number on the roll; the Europeans were 17 per cent.; and the children of mixed race, 10 per cent. The boys numbered 1,181, the girls 952. The children below the age of five years were 2 per cent. of the roll-number; 54 per cent. were between five and ten; 40 per cent. between ten and fifteen; 4 per cent. above fifteen.

The expenditure on Native schools (including £70 7s. 11d. received from Native reserves funds) was £14,290 4s., made up of the following items: Salaries and allowances to teachers, £10,929 9s. 3d.; school requisites, £335 9s. 10d.; repairs and small works, £461 19s. 8d.; inspection (including travelling), £637 3s. 8d.; grants to boarding-schools and travelling expenses of scholars, £1,541 1s. 10d.; buildings, fencing, and furniture, £315 5s. 4d.; sundries, £69 14s. 5d.

In the four Native boarding-schools (of which three are Church of England schools and one Roman Catholic), there were at the end of the year 65 pupils maintained by arrangement with the Education Department, 43 of these being holders of scholarships. At St. Stephen's, Parnell, there were 10 Government pupils and 39 others; at Te Aute, Hawke's Bay, 12 Government pupils and 62 others, of whom 12 were Europeans; at Hukarere (girls' school), Napier, 20 Government pupils and 32 others; and at St. Joseph's (girls' school), Napier, 23 Government pupils and 8 others.

Apirana Turupu Ngata is a standing evidence of the efficiency of the instruction provided for the young people of the Maori race. Apirana was, as a small boy, a promising pupil of the Native school at Waiomatatini, in the Waiapu district. He was sent to Te Aute College, a boarding-school for Maoris, and while he was there he passed the matriculation examination of the New Zealand University. The Trustees of the Te Makarini Scholarships Fund then gave him an extra scholarship tenable at Canterbury College, and at the end of last year he passed the first section of the examination for the degree of LL.B. An essay from the pen of Apirana has been published in a Christchurch newspaper, and since published in pamphlet form, with the title "The Past and Future of the Maori." The essay is an able one, and displays a considerable command of the English tongue. With vigorous declamation he declares that the teachers set a bad example in matters of health, morality and religion, and that Minister after Minister neglects to make inquiry as to their qualifications. It is scarcely necessary to say that frequent and careful investigation is made with respect to their qualifications, and that, if Apirana has any sufficient ground for making this attack, the facts on which it is based are not known to the department. He has been asked to render the department a great service by disclosing the facts, but declines to do so. He acknowledges that the charges are "exaggerated, and founded on too limited an experience," and intimates that, if his choice must lie between supplying information to substantiate them and unreservedly withdrawing them, he prefers to withdraw them unreservedly.