

At the present time the number of children in the preparatory division is nearly 47 per cent. of the roll, and, while this percentage is considerably lower than that of the Maori children included in the preparatory divisions in public schools, to whom English is probably much more familiar, we consider that it is too high, and this owing to the reasons we have above drawn attention to.

We find that with the large number of schools and the increased demands upon our time arising from the expansion of the work, we have little opportunity for giving teachers the practical assistance in methods of teaching and organization that is evidently much required. While we are always prepared to do what we can on the occasion of the annual visits, we often wish that we had much more time to give instruction to such teachers as most require it, especially to assist and advise those newly appointed to the service. With a view to encouraging all uncertificated head teachers to become certificated, the Department has agreed to assist by contributing towards the expenses they may incur in obtaining tuition. We are glad to find that several of the teachers have qualified for teachers' certificates during the year.

The following table shows how we should classify the village schools according to the degree of efficiency recorded at the annual visit:—

	Number of Schools.
Very good to excellent	26
Satisfactory to good	69
Inferior to weak	11

Three schools were not inspected, two of them having begun operations after the annual visit to the district had taken place, and one having been closed temporarily owing to sickness.

#### SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

The Department requires that the School Committee shall make provision for the cleaning of the school, and this is usually carried out by the senior pupils under the supervision of the teachers. The results, so far as the interior of the buildings is concerned, are generally very satisfactory indeed. Many of the schools are kept spotlessly clean, and the children take a pride in keeping them so. There still remains a good deal to be done in beautifying the grounds by planting suitable trees for shelter and ornament, and by forming flower-gardens. Even where there is no organized instruction in agriculture we should like teachers to endeavour to make the appearance of their school and its grounds the most striking feature of the landscape. The Department has not been unwilling to help in the matter, and the only explanation that can be given for the uninviting appearance of some of the schools is want of enthusiasm—we had almost said laziness—on the part of the teacher. We wish that such teachers could have the opportunity of seeing such school-grounds as those at Wai-iti, Oparure, Waioweka, Rangitukia, Tikitiki, Paeroa, Hapua, Te Kao, Ahipara, Karetu, Te Whaiti, Oruanui, Tokaanu, Torere, and Taemaro, in order that they might realize what can be done in the direction of improving the general appearance of their surroundings. And not the least important aspect of the subject is its contribution to the education of the pupils.

#### SECONDARY EDUCATION.

There are now nine institutions controlled by various denominational authorities which offer the means of providing secondary education to Maori boys and girls. They are: Te Aute College, Hawke's Bay; Hukarere Girls' School, Napier; St. Joseph's Convent School, Napier; St. Stephen's Boys' School, Auckland; Queen Victoria Girls' School, Auckland; Turakina Girls' School, Wanganui; Hikurangi Boys' College, Clareville, Wairarapa; Te Waipounamu Girls' School, North Canterbury; and Waerenga-a-hika College, Gisborne. Four free places were also provided at the Sacred Heart College, Auckland, and one at the Auckland Girls' Grammar School. The number of pupils on the rolls of these schools at the 31st December, 1912, was—Boys, 167; girls, 202; total, 369. Of these, forty-eight boys and forty-four girls held free places provided by the Department for the benefit of scholars from primary village schools or from ordinary public schools. The schools are inspected and examined annually by us, and we are pleased to note the steady increase in general efficiency. The results of our examination were again exceedingly satisfactory.

All the secondary Native schools make provision for vocational training in some form or another, and in a way each school has its speciality. Except in a few cases, where promising pupils with a view to the Civil Service Junior Examination undertake the work of the Seventh Standard, there is no provision for more advanced subjects. As a matter of fact, in none of the secondary Maori schools at the present time is there any attempt or desire to give what is usually understood by a "college" education. Generally speaking, the girls' schools afford further training in English subjects and in various branches of domestic duties—cooking, sewing and dressmaking, housewifery, nursing and hygiene; the boys' schools, in English and manual training—woodwork, elementary practical agriculture, and kindred subjects; and that is all.

At St. Stephen's Boys' School the training in woodwork has undoubtedly proved of great value, and it is much easier now to find openings for the best of the boys in suitable trades. At Te Aute also the establishment of woodwork classes has been followed with marked success, and the results obtained constitute a striking feature of the work of the college. As an example, we may mention that the school furniture required for the new Hukarere Girls' School was made by the boys at Te Aute, and its construction reflects great credit upon them and their instructor.