

No. 2.

REPORT OF INSPECTOR OF NATIVE SCHOOLS.

SIR,—

10th May, 1919.

I have the honour to present herewith the following report upon Native schools for the year 1918:—

NEW SCHOOLS, ETC.

At the close of the year 1917 there were in operation 118 Native schools. During the year under review schools were opened at *Waiohau*, Galatea; *Huiarau* (Ruatahuna), Urewera country; and at *Werowero*, Lake Ohia, Mangonui district; while *Whangaruru*, Bay of Islands, which had been temporarily closed towards the end of 1917, was reopened at the beginning of the year. Three schools—*Taemuro*, Mangonui district; *Taharoa*, Kawhia; and *Pamoana*, Wanganui River—from which the teachers had either resigned or been transferred to other schools, were not in operation at the end of the year, the services of suitable teachers not being obtainable. There were thus 119 Native schools in operation when on account of the influenza epidemic in the last two months of the year all schools had to be closed down.

The schools at *Huiarau*, Urewera country, and at *Werowero*, Mangonui district, were opened in buildings erected by the Maoris upon sites which had been previously acquired for school purposes, while at *Waiohau*, Galatea, the school was opened in a building offered by the Maoris for temporary use. In connection with *Waiohau* arrangements have been made to acquire a site of 6 acres, upon which suitable school buildings will be eventually erected. All these new schools have made a very promising beginning, and are now supplying a want that has been long recognized.

The new buildings (school and residence) at *Moerangi*, Raglan district, were completed in the early part of the year. With regard to *Manutahi* and *Kaitaha* (*Whakawhitira*), in the East Coast district, the erection of the necessary school buildings had to be delayed on account of the prohibitive cost, while in the case of *Tihiomanono*, in the same district, difficulties which arose in connection with the acquisition of a site have caused delay.

During the latter part of the year applications for the establishment of schools at *Kareponia*, Awanui North; *Awarua*, Bay of Islands; and *Waima* Landing, Hokianga, were received by the Department, and in each case the preliminary investigations are to be made during the current year.

In consequence of the decision of the Department to take over the *Motatau* Public School and administer it as a Native school it was necessary that a residence should be built. The work has been put in hand, and is nearing completion.

ATTENDANCE, ETC.

1. *Native Village Schools.*

The number of pupils on the rolls of the village schools at the close of the year was—Maoris, 4,472; Europeans, 592: total, 5,064—a decrease of 109 on the roll number of the previous year. The withdrawal of upwards of seventy Maori children from the Whakarapa Native School for enrolment in the Convent School established within a few chains of the Native school, together with the temporary closing of one or two schools, accounts largely for the decrease referred to. The average weekly roll number for the year was 5,281, and the average attendance 4,551, the average percentage of regularity being 86·2, compared with 86·6 in the preceding year. Thirty schools showed an average attendance of 90 per cent. or over of the possible attendance, *Manaia* School once again heading the list of schools with a splendid record of 99 per cent. From Table H2, where information regarding the attendance of each school is given, it will be seen that 80 per cent. or over of the possible attendance was attained by ninety-eight schools. During the year there was a large amount of sickness, and the weather for the most part was not good, and there is no doubt that the attendance at many schools was thus considerably affected. Still, while it is pleasing to observe that several schools have improved their positions in the list, the poor showing made by a number of schools, even when allowance is made for the admitted difficulties in many cases, it is felt is not altogether satisfactory. Good-attendance certificates were gained by 472 pupils in the village schools.

2. *Mission Schools.*

In addition to the village schools five mission schools were also visited. These are—*Putiki* Mission School, *Tokaanu* Convent School, *Matata* Convent School, and two schools on the Wanganui River—the convents at *Jerusalem* and *Ranana*. The roll number of these schools at the end of the year was 175, the average roll number was 171, and the average percentage of regularity was 90·2.

3. *Secondary Schools.*

The secondary schools visited are those which have been established by various denominational bodies in the Dominion. The combined roll number at the end of the year 1918 was 471, the average roll number was 479, and the average percentage of regularity was 90·7.