

Higher Education and Free Places.

The Government has not instituted any schools especially for the secondary education of Maoris, but a number of such schools having been established and being maintained by the various denominational bodies, the Government secures free continued education for qualified Maori children by providing at these schools a number of scholarships or free places. The value of the free places is £30 per annum, and they are tenable for two years. The roll number of these schools (ten in number) at the end of 1922 was 413, of which number fifty-two boys and fifty-six girls held the free places referred to. The great majority of the scholars were ex-pupils of Native schools. The syllabus of work to be followed by free-place holders as prescribed by the Department is designed to secure such industrial training as is considered desirable in the case of Maoris: the boys learn agriculture and woodwork, and the girls take a domestic course. A farm of 600 acres is being worked in conjunction with Te Aute College—one of the schools referred to. In some of the schools the more capable pupils are prepared for the Public Service Entrance and Matriculation Examinations, several candidates being successful in 1922. The Makarini and Buller Scholarships were founded out of private bequests, and are tenable by Maori scholars at Te Aute College. One senior and two junior Makarini Scholarships and one Buller Scholarship were awarded in 1922, there being keen competition for the senior Makarini and the Buller Scholarships. Disappointment is expressed at the small number of candidates from Native village schools competing for the Government junior scholarships or free places, and the obligation is impressed upon teachers of encouraging suitable pupils to enter for the qualifying examination.

Senior free places are provided for boys in the form of industrial and agricultural scholarships, which enable the holders to be apprenticed to suitable trades, or to obtain agricultural training at Te Aute College. Two scholarships of the latter type were held in 1922. Senior free places for girls take the form of nursing scholarships. These scholarships have proved very satisfactory, a number of Maori girls having qualified as nurses and now being at work in the field. At the end of 1922 three scholarship-holders were in training.

University scholarships are awarded to promising Maori youths who have matriculated, and are intended to enable them to take up a profession which will eventually prove of service and benefit to the Maori race. Three such scholarships were current at the end of last year, the holders studying medicine, law, and engineering respectively.

Cost.

The total payments made by the Department for Native schools during the year ended the 31st March, 1923, amounted to £69,631, being £8,019 less than in the previous year. The chief items of expenditure were teachers' salaries and allowances, £55,052; new buildings and additions, £2,642; maintenance of buildings, repairs, &c., £2,579; secondary education, £3,805; books and school requisites, £1,764. Reduced expenditure on new buildings and on the maintenance of buildings accounts for the greater part of the saving in cost effected in 1922-23.

SECONDARY EDUCATION.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.

(Table KI in E.-6.)

Schools affording education of a secondary nature are established in every centre of any importance in the Dominion, and are at present of the following types: Secondary schools, technical high schools, district high schools, private secondary schools, and Maori secondary schools. The majority of the district high schools are in the country centres, the secondary schools and technical high schools being in the larger towns and cities.