

1941.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION OF NATIVE CHILDREN.

(In continuation of E. 3, 1940.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

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No. 1.

REPORT OF THE SENIOR INSPECTOR OF NATIVE SCHOOLS.

SIR,—

12th May, 1941.

I have the honour to present the following report on the Native schools for the year 1940 :—

I. POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION OF THE MAORI.

Of recent years the problem of providing suitable post-primary educational facilities for the Maori has become very acute. There are several reasons for this, some inherent in the system of education as provided to-day and some due to social and population changes. In New Zealand every child, including the Maori boy and girl, is entitled to a free place up to the age of twenty years, but the implication of this provision is less generous to the Maori than would at first appear. The technical schools and secondary schools have necessarily been established in the larger centres of population, while, for the country child, the secondary departments of district high schools have been provided. A child living in the neighbourhood of any of these schools may attend without further cost to his parents. Children who live in remote areas may be conveyed to the school or, alternatively, may receive a boarding allowance of 7s. 6d. per week. Although most of the Maori people live in settlements remote from the larger centres, these generous provisions should have been attractive enough to ensure that a large number of Maori children continued at school after passing Form II. It is a fact, however, that relatively few Maori pupils do take advantage of the facilities available at the State post-primary schools. There are several reasons for this. In the first place, many Maori families are not in a position to provide the necessary clothing nor to supplement the boarding allowance of 7s. 6d., even if board could be found in the towns. Secondly, the schools most immediately in their vicinity are the district high schools, the curriculum of many of which is not satisfactorily adjusted to the non-academic country child. The curriculum of many secondary and technical schools is practical and quite suitable, but these schools are in another social world and the cost of living in the cities makes attendance at them prohibitive. It must be accepted, therefore, that the general State provisions for the post-primary education of the children of this Dominion do not, in fact, provide for many Maori children.