

during the past ten years the number of children attending Native schools has increased by about 46 per cent., and there are schools having on the roll eighty, ninety, and even 130 Maori children, whereas in former years a school of forty was considered to be a large school.

Records kept by teachers living in populous Maori districts go to show that, as far as their experience goes, the number of births exceeds that of deaths. The constant attendance at many of the schools is further evidence on the point. Medical inspection and examination of the children in Native schools by the Native medical officers would afford the means not only of ascertaining the facts as to the mortality amongst the Maori children, but also of enabling teachers to take such precautions as might be found necessary to prevent the spread of sickness.

Early in 1908 the Hon. the Minister of Education paid a visit of inspection to the schools on the East Coast, Bay of Plenty, part of the Hot Lakes District, and part of the South Island. He expressed himself as being well satisfied with the condition in which he found the schools as well as with the instruction he saw being given in them. His visit will, I am sure, be much appreciated by the teachers, and will go far to encourage them in their work and in their endeavours to maintain the good opinion the Minister has formed.

I have again to acknowledge the valuable services rendered during the year by my colleague Mr. J. Porteous, M.A., Assistant Inspector. Through his help a large amount of inspection work was rendered possible, and valuable assistance in methods of teaching was given to the teachers.

W. W. BIRD.

VERIFIED