

Three schools are in charge of teachers who are themselves members of the Maori race, and the Inspectors speak very highly of their efficiency. Several Maori girls who have completed their course in the secondary schools are employed as junior assistants, and are on the whole doing satisfactory work.

Comparison of the amount paid in salaries during the past year with that paid during the year 1906 will show an increase of £5,700. Part of this increase is due of course to the large increase in the attendance, but the greater portion of it is due to the effect of the revised scale of salaries introduced in 1907.

EXPENDITURE.

The total expenditure on Native schools during the year 1910 was £33,387 1s. 11d. Included in this amount is the sum of £4,305 paid from revenues from national endowments. New buildings and additions involved an expenditure of £2,844; maintenance and repairs, £1,269. Table H10 is a classified summary of expenditure.

No. 2.

The INSPECTORS OF NATIVE SCHOOLS to the INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF SCHOOLS.

SIR,—

Wellington, 31st March, 1911.

In accordance with instructions, we have the honour to place before you our report on the general condition of the Native schools and the work done by them during the year 1910.

At the end of the year 1909 there were ninety-four schools in operation. During the year three new schools were opened—viz., *Rakaunui* (in the Kawhia district), *Port Waikato* (near the mouth of the Waikato River), and *Waimiha* (in the King-country); and two were reopened—viz., *Pamoana* (Wanganui River), and *Te Kopua* (King-country). This makes a total of ninety-nine schools open at the end of the year 1910.

With regard to proposals for new schools, building operations are in hand at *Orauta* (near Kawakawa), *Te Huruhi* (Waiheke Island); and the erection of schools at *Taharoa* (Kawhia district), *Rangitahi* (near Galatea), *Hororua* (East Cape), *Pakiri* (near Frazertown), is in contemplation. The establishment of schools at *Waioiao* (Bay of Islands), *Māngatuna* (East Coast), and *Whakaki* (Hawke's Bay) has also been decided upon, and arrangements for the formal acquisition of the land for the school-sites are now in hand.

No action is to be taken at present in the case of *Pukehina* and *Oruawhoro*; the claims of *Okere* (Rotorua), *Maungatapu* (Tauranga), and *Te Iringa* (Bay of Islands), will, however, receive further attention. With regard to *Taheke* (Hokianga), the Department was of opinion that the children might attend the nearest Board school.

Other applications which require investigation are *Puketui* (near Thames), *Moerangi* (near Raglan), *Mataniho* (Tuhoe country), *Waihuehue* (near Houhora), *Wairahi* (near Whananaki), and *Toreohaua* (near Gisborne).

In connection with some of these applications we have to state that the number of children available is somewhat less than that required by the regulations for the establishment of a fully equipped school. Thus in a Maori settlement with, say, only seventeen children a Native school cannot be established under present conditions. From the nature of the case aided or household schools with European teachers are not practicable, and Maori teachers are not available. The expense is too great to warrant the Department's erecting a school and residence for so small a number of children; and until some inexpensive building can be designed we are afraid that this consideration will always prevent a small settlement from having a school.

GENERAL REMARKS.

With regard to the various subjects of the school course we offer the following remarks:—

Reading.—In the infant classes the reading continues to show steady improvement, and there is no reason to be dissatisfied with the attainments of the pupils in this subject except in a very few schools, in the case of which it is difficult for us to believe that constant teaching with systematic effort has been given.

As a rule, the reading in the upper classes is relatively not so good. Generally we find want of expression, and complete disinclination to speak naturally so that the reading may be distinctly heard. Thus we get the impression that the pupils do not always understand what they read. We do not think it necessary or even desirable that each sentence shall be torn to pieces and every word analytically examined, but we are strongly of opinion that the work cannot be regarded as satisfactory unless the child can picture mentally the ideas contained in the passage read; and the teacher can secure this, only by first getting the children to express orally their mental views.

We fully realize the difficulties under which teachers are placed in dealing with Maori children, whose reading is confined almost entirely to what they read in school, and is not, as in the case of European children, supplemented to a considerable extent by reading at home.

Teachers will do well, therefore, to adopt whatever means they can find to encourage wide reading. The libraries which have been established in many schools contribute materially to remedy the defect, but steps should be taken to ascertain whether the books are actually read, and whether also the ideas in them have been assimilated. For the junior classes we should be glad to see illustrated story-books containing simple tales for infants supplied to such schools as in our judgment merit special consideration for excellence in reading.