

8·33 in 1909. It is shown by the table following that there has been considerable increase in the marriage-rate, which has been above the standard during each of the last fifteen years :—

Marriages, Number and Rate.

Year.	Total Number of Marriages registered.	Marriage-rate.		Year.	Total Number of Marriages registered.	Marriage-rate.	
		Per 1,000 of Population.	Compared with Rate in 1882-86 taken as 100.			Per 1,000 of Population.	Compared with Rate in 1882-86 taken as 100.
1882-86	3,663	6·68	100	1898	5,091	6·91	103
1887	3,563	5·97	89	1899	5,461	7·28	109
1888	3,617	5·97	89	1900	5,860	7·67	115
1889	3,632	5·93	89	1901	6,095	7·83	117
1890	3,797	6·12	92	1902	6,394	8·01	120
1891	3,805	6·04	90	1903	6,748	8·23	123
1892	4,002	6·23	93	1904	6,983	8·26	124
1893	4,115	6·22	93	1905	7,200	8·28	124
1894	4,178	6·15	92	1906	7,592	8·48	127
1895	4,110	5·94	89	1907	8,192	8·91	133
1896	4,843	6·85	103	1908	8,339	8·82	132
1897	4,928	6·83	102	1909	8,094	8·33	125
				1910	8,236	8·30	124

The marriage rate, measured by the total population, does not show the true position when, as in the case of New Zealand, the age-constitution of the people fluctuates considerably. A more satisfactory standard is found in the number of persons of marriageable age, defined as meaning the unmarried and widowed of males aged 20 years and upwards and of females aged 15 years and upwards. The rates are given for four census years :—

Year of Census.	Proportion of Unmarried per 1,000 of Total.		Proportion of Marriages per 1,000 of the			
	Males.	Females.	Marriageable Men.	Marriageable Women.	Marriageable Persons.	Total Population.
1891	246·2	267·8	46·22	48·10	47·14	6·04
1896	264·2	308·3	49·11	47·09	48·08	6·85
1901	278·3	330·6	53·56	49·96	51·69	7·83
1906	295·8	326·9	54·09	55·15	54·62	8·48

The total number of marriages solemnized does not include marriages where both parties are of the aboriginal Native race, such persons being exempted from the necessity of complying with the provisions of the Marriage Act, although at liberty to take advantage thereof. One hundred and sixty-nine marriages in which both parties were Maoris were contracted in 1910 in terms of the Act: 25 by Registrars, 78 by clergymen of the Church of England, 4 by a Presbyterian minister, 34 by Roman Catholic ministers, 10 by ministers of the Church of the Latter-day Saints, 16 by Methodist ministers, and 2 by Salvation Army.

Ages of Persons Married.

Of the persons married in 1910, 161 bridegrooms and 1,293 brides were under 21 years of age. Of the bridegrooms, two were between 17 and 18, and five between 18 and 19. Of the brides, seven were between 15 and 16, and thirty-four were between 16 and 17 years of age. The proportion of men married is greatest at the ages of 25 to 30, and of women at from 21 to 25 years.

DEATHS.

The deaths in 1910 numbered 9,639, a rate of 9·71 in every 1,000 persons living, as against 9·22 in 1909. This is below the average of the previous ten years, 9·90 per 1,000.