

CLASSIFICATION.

The classification of the pupils in the Native primary schools (including the mission schools) as at the 31st December, 1915, is shown as follows:—

Classes.	Number on Roll.
Standard VII	29
„ VI	150
„ V	308
„ IV	430
„ III	607
„ II	689
„ I	742
Preparatory	2,377
Totals	5,332

SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

In the great majority of the schools the cleanliness of the buildings is distinctly praiseworthy, and the pupils who are primarily responsible for this condition of affairs take great pride in keeping the floors, walls, and desks spotlessly clean. In many of the schools, however, much more might be done to make the interior appearance of the schoolrooms by their attractiveness more inviting, and to secure greater tidiness and neatness in the methodical arrangement of books, maps, cupboards, and other appliances. The importance of these matters and the effect on the pupils are not overlooked in well-ordered schools, while failure to recognize these points generally betrays a lack of method in the management and work of the school. Every schoolroom should furnish an object-lesson in cleanliness, neatness, and methodical arrangement.

In a very large number of the schools the grounds and gardens are kept in excellent order, and much time and labour are devoted to beautifying the school surroundings. In others, again, a great deal of apathy is evident, and little attempt, if any, has been made to improve the appearance of the school property, the result being that some school-grounds are almost barren wastes. No school should be without a school-garden of some sort, and every opportunity should be taken to make improvements by the planting of shrubs and trees. Experience shows that the pupils are only too willing to assist in this matter, all that is required being encouragement and direction from a teacher who possesses the necessary inclination and energy.

ORGANIZATION.

In a large number of schools the organization may be considered as ranging from good to very good; in a few it is excellent; while in a fairly considerable number it cannot be regarded as entirely satisfactory. In the last-mentioned schools the chief weaknesses lie in the preparation of suitable time-tables and schemes of work, and also in the methods of teaching. Insufficient provision is made for the most important subjects, and the grouping of classes is not always based on sound principles. Then again there is not, on the part of the teachers, satisfactory daily preparation of the lessons and work, the consequence being that owing to the absence of aim much valuable time is lost in the course of the day. The want of careful preparation is quite unjustifiable, and unless the teacher is able to give in a short concise statement some rather definite idea of what is intended to be accomplished by the lesson the pupils are not apt to receive very efficient instruction.

Generally, the schemes of work continue to show satisfactory improvement in the preparation, and in the best schools they display sound judgment and skill. On the other hand, it is evident that the purpose and value of the schemes as teaching-aids are not properly appreciated by some teachers, who fail to realize that their schemes or plans of work should show what they propose to do, and as far as practicable how they propose to do it. Schemes which could not possibly have been of any assistance whatever to the teachers, for whose guidance and benefit they are necessary, have in some cases been presented.

The extension of work involved by the introduction of the new syllabus has necessitated an increase in the school hours, which are now five per day. On the whole, the majority of teachers have found little difficulty in adapting their methods to the new requirements. Still, there is evidence that the new requirements have not been carefully studied by some, and it is extremely doubtful if they have even read the "Further Directions" which have been specially prepared for their instruction and guidance. In the appendix to the regulations will be found an ample supply of material from which courses of lessons should be drawn up, and the attention of teachers is accordingly directed thereto.

With regard to the promotions made by the teachers it can be said that they are generally based upon satisfactory evidence. Teachers are, however, met with who regard the attainments of their pupils as representing the limit of attainment possible as far as Maori children are concerned, and who are somewhat surprised when exception is taken to the proposed promotions. It is necessary also to draw the attention of teachers to the length of time taken by some children in the preparatory division to reach the standard classes.

It is pleasing to be able to report that several teachers, with a view to improving their status, have taken advantage of the assistance granted by the Department, and have succeeded during the year in obtaining their certificates or in obtaining partial success towards certificates.

The discipline of the schools is generally very satisfactory indeed, and in only a few schools could exception be taken to the neglect of training in ordinary courtesy and politeness in manners.

With regard to the methods of teaching which are dealt with in the remarks upon various subjects, it is satisfactory to report that a general improvement is noticeable.