

No. 2.

REPORT OF INSPECTOR OF NATIVE SCHOOLS.

Sir,—

31st May, 1918.

I have the honour to submit the following report on Native schools for the year 1917.

NEW SCHOOLS, ETC.

The number of schools in active operation at the end of 1916 was 118. During the year 1917 a new school was established at *Kaitaha*, East Coast; and two schools, *Wharekahika*, East Coast, and *Te Whaiti*, Urewera country, which had been closed temporarily towards the end of 1916, were reopened. *Te Huruhi*, Waiheke Island, which had ceased to fulfil its function as a Native school, was transferred to the Auckland Education Board; and *Whangaruru*, Bay of Islands, owing to the resignation of the teacher, was closed temporarily towards the end of the year. *Port Waikato* School, which had been carried on in buildings rented for the purpose, was, owing to decreased attendance, closed permanently. There were therefore at the end of the year 1917 118 Native schools in operation.

The school at *Kaitaha* (*Whakawhitira*), East Coast, was opened in buildings provided by the Maoris, and since the necessity for the establishment of a school in this part has been proved, steps are to be taken to provide more suitable and up-to-date buildings. The new buildings at *Pamapurua*—school and residence—were completed early in the year, and the erection of the necessary buildings at *Moerangi*, Raglan, was put in hand. In connection with the application for a school at *Manutahi*, East Coast, it has been decided to proceed with the establishment of a school. The applications for schools at *Kopua* and *Karakanui*, Kaipara Harbour, were declined, as it was considered that the children concerned could attend a public school in the district. With regard to *Ruatahuna* and *Maungapohatu*, Urewera country, the only progress to be reported is that the erection of temporary buildings at Ruatahuna has been undertaken by the Maoris and is nearing completion. During the year an application for the establishment of a school at *Tihiomanono*, East Coast, and the renewal of an application for a school at *Werowero*, Lake Ohia, were received by the Department, and in these cases the usual preliminary steps have been taken. In the latter case the Maoris offered to erect suitable buildings.

The request of the Auckland Education Board that on the grounds of efficiency the *Motatau* Public School, Bay of Islands, be taken over by the Department and administered as a Native school has been agreed to. The increased attendance at *Whakarewarewa*, *Te Araroa*, and *Tikitiki* made it necessary to provide additional class-room accommodation at these schools during the year. In several other schools increased accommodation will probably have to be provided.

At the request of the controlling authorities of the mission schools at *Hiruharama* and *Ranana*, Wanganui River, the inspection of the schools will be undertaken by the Department.

ATTENDANCE, ETC.

1. Native Village Schools.

The number of pupils on the rolls of the 118 village schools on the 31st December, 1917, was—Maoris, 4,622; Europeans, 551; total 5,173: an increase of 41 on the roll number of the previous year. The average weekly roll number for the year was 5,264; and the average attendance 4,558, the average percentage of regularity being 86·6, compared with 86·8 in the preceding year. In thirty-eight schools an average of over 90 per cent. of the possible attendance for the year was attained, *Manaia* School once more succeeding in securing the record for good attendance. Table H.—2, giving the respective attendances of the various schools, shows that in ninety-eight schools over 80 per cent. of the possible attendances was reached, the remaining schools failing to reach that percentage. When allowance is made for the difficulties and drawbacks under which the children in many instances attend school the position of many schools in the list is the reverse of creditable. At the close of the year 579 pupils gained good-attendance certificates.

2. Mission Schools.

The following mission schools—*Tokaanu* Convent School, *Matata* Convent School, and *Putiki* Mission School—were inspected and examined. The roll number of these schools at the end of the year was 124, the average roll number was 124, and the average percentage of regularity was 90·5.

3. Secondary Schools.

Ten secondary schools which have been established by various denominational bodies in the Dominion were visited and examined during the year. The combined roll number at the end of the year 1917 was 487, the average roll number was 491, and the average percentage of regularity was 92·5.