

the attendance of the individual schools is supplied, shows that ninety-four schools gained 80 per cent. and over of the possible attendance, and that of this number thirty-seven schools gained 90 per cent. and over of the possible attendance. Special mention must again be made of the excellent attendance of the pupils of the *Manaiā* Native School, Coromandel. This school has held the record for regularity of attendance for a great many years. The attendance of many schools was affected during the year by epidemics of measles and mumps, and it has also to be borne in mind that in many districts adverse conditions militate against the regular attendance of a large number of pupils. Still, even when allowance is made in the directions indicated, the attendance at a considerable number of the schools near the bottom of the list cannot be regarded as satisfactory. In a number of schools where the attendance has been irregular it was found necessary to take action under the compulsory clauses of the Education Act, which apply equally to Maori and European children attending Native schools. Nevertheless, experience indicates that the most potent factor in securing regularity of attendance consists in the personal influence of the teacher on both the children and the parents, and it is almost certain that the excellent attendance in many schools is due to no other cause. In such schools the need for enforcing attendance does not arise: the teacher's devotion to duty and to the interests of the people commands their whole-hearted support, and so strong is the bond of sympathy and affection between them that it would be difficult to prevent the children from attending school. There is generally something radically wrong in a school where regularity of attendance is secured only by invoking the power of the law. Good-attendance certificates were gained by 329 pupils of Native schools.

(2.) *Mission Schools.*

In addition to the 119 Native village schools, six mission schools were also inspected—viz., *Putiki* Mission School, *Tokuānu* Convent School, *Matata* Convent School, *Whakarapa* Convent School, and the convent schools at *Hirukarama* and *Ranana*, on the Wanganui River. The roll number of these schools was 267, and the average percentage of regularity of attendance was 81·3. The attendance at *Putiki* Mission School and at *Whakarapa* Convent is not altogether satisfactory.

(3.) *Secondary Native Schools.*

Ten schools which have been established in the educational interests of the Maoris by various denominational bodies were also examined. The combined rolls of the schools at the end of the year was 474, and the average percentage of regularity of attendance was 93·7.

The following summary gives the particulars relating to roll number and attendance of the three classes of schools in tabulated form:—

Schools.	Number.	Roll Number at End of Year.	Average Weekly Roll Number.	Average Attendance.	Percentage of Regularity.
Native village	119	5,508	5,404	4,789	88·6
Native mission	6	267	273	222	81·3
Native secondary	10	474	443	416	93·7
Totals	135	6,249	6,120	5,427	88·7

SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

In a very large number of our schools the teachers deserve credit for the condition of the grounds and buildings. Their own gardens are well kept, the fences are in good order, and the hedges have a trim appearance. The playgrounds are clean and tidy, and the children are encouraged by means of the school-gardens and by the planting of shrubs and trees to beautify and improve the surroundings. Under the supervision of the teachers the pupils attend to the sweeping and washing of the schoolrooms, and generally the buildings are found to be scrupulously clean. In this matter and in the cleanly appearance of their desks the children take great pride. In a number of schools the conditions of the shed and out-offices show that there is a lack of supervision and inspection on the part of the teachers.

During the year it was found possible to have the painting and general renovation of a very fair number of school buildings carried out. The Department has been compelled, however, on account of the unreasonably high cost, to hold over several important and necessary works. The Auckland Education Board has rendered valuable assistance to the Department in carrying out certain works. With regard to minor repairs, it is well to remind teachers that the regulations require that "they shall effect such repairs as are required to maintain the residence, fences, and gates in good order and condition." The garden must be cared for, and the teacher is expected to "do such work on the remainder of the school-grounds as will keep them in good order." It cannot be said that in the case of every school the obligations referred to are faithfully observed.

INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS.

In last year's report it was stated that for various reasons it had become necessary to revert to the system of inspection which had been followed prior to 1916, and accordingly during the past year the work connected with the examination and inspection of the schools was conducted by the Inspectors of Native Schools. The schools in the South Island were, however, inspected by the local Inspectors. The reports upon the work indicate that the efficiency of the schools, generally