

The staffing of the schools has also been immensely improved by the use of more certificated teachers. Every credit must be given to those uncertificated teachers who worked so well and conscientiously in bygone years under difficult conditions, and even to-day we have some outstanding teachers without any certificate, but the introduction of more qualified teachers has undoubtedly contributed much to the increased efficiency of our Native schools. A comparison of the staffs of even twenty-five years ago produces some very revealing figures :—

	Head-teachers.		Assistants.	
	1920.	1945.	1920.	1945.
A Certificate	2
B Certificate	3	36	..	18
C Certificate	14	102	2	145
D Certificate	27	11	7	24
E Certificate	3	..	3	..
Uncertificated	72	6	122	43
	119	157	134	230
Percentage of uncertificated teachers ..	60.5	3.7	91.0	18.7

In the above table, junior assistants and probationary assistants have not been included. Among the 43 uncertificated assistants in 1945 are several ex junior assistants acting in a relieving capacity.

At the end of 1945 there were 15,203 Maori children attending 885 public schools throughout the Dominion.

In addition to the 157 schools mentioned above, there are 10 Native mission schools and convents in various parts of the North Island, and the Department also administers 4 schools in the Chatham Islands.

The year 1945 marked the termination of World War II, and towards the end of the year many of our soldier teachers returned to the Dominion. Of those who received their discharge, the great majority elected to take advantage of the Government's provision of refresher courses at the training colleges, to enable them to improve their technique in teaching and to get in touch with the latest developments in education. I had the privilege of addressing a large number of returned men at the Auckland Training College, and of giving them an insight into the aims and objects of Native schools, and information concerning some of the valuable educational projects that have been carried out in recent years. In addition, the Department gave every facility to our returned Native-school teachers to spend periods of observation in some of the most efficient of our schools.

We were therefore not able to utilize their services as class-teachers to any great extent, and we again experienced great difficulty in keeping the schools fully staffed. No school, however, was closed for a sufficiently long period to affect adversely the standard of education of the children. The problem of finding suitable board and lodging for certificated assistants continues to be a very difficult one. Last year the Department provided or rented houses for this purpose in eight districts, but the problem remains very acute in several others. Even in the larger towns, board is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain.

In 1945, 16 Maori students were admitted to training college in continuance of our policy of encouraging young Maori men and women to enter the teaching profession. The reports concerning the progress of these young people are very encouraging, and, though a very small number occasionally find some difficulty in one or two subjects, the great majority are displaying keenness and enthusiasm for their work. Their