

1908.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION : NATIVE SCHOOLS.

[In continuation of E.—2, 1907.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM THE THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

THE number of Maori village schools in operation at the end of 1907 was ninety-nine, as against one hundred at the end of 1906. Four new schools were opened during the year—viz., Rawhitiroa, near Raglan; Waikare, Bay of Islands; Reporua, on the East Coast; and Motuti, in the Hokianga district. During the year the schools at Turanganui (Wellington District), Waimana and Kokako (in Urewera country), Whangape (in Hokianga district), and Waikawa (in Marlborough) were closed, while Wairau School was transferred to the Marlborough Education Board. The new schools reported last year as being in hand—viz., Tuhara, Mataora Bay, and Wharekawa—have been completed. Suitable buildings are to be erected shortly at Waikare and Reporua, while arrangements are in hand to provide for Matihetihe, Rakaunui, and Motiti Island.

The number of children on the roll of the schools at the end of December, 1907, was 4,183, as against 4,174 of the previous year. Epidemics of sickness have interfered with the regularity of the attendance, while most of the children in the Tuhoe schools have been withdrawn. The average attendance shows, therefore, a decrease, being 3,561, as against 3,607 in 1906, there being also a difference of 2·8 per cent. in the percentage of regularity. Several schools attained very high percentages of attendance, one, indeed, reaching practically 100 per cent. The past ten years show a very noteworthy increase in the number of children in Maori schools. At the end of 1897 there were 2,864 children attending seventy-seven schools. Since then there has been an increase of 1,319, or 46 per cent., while there are over twenty more schools. This points to the increasing desire for education amongst the Maori race.

In addition to the Native village schools, there are six Native mission schools at which primary instruction is given to Maori children, while secondary education is provided for by six boarding-schools under the control of the various Church authorities. One hundred and forty-nine Maori boys and 125 girls were on the rolls of these schools at the end of the year. The Department's officers inspect and examine yearly both the mission schools and the boarding-schools, the latter of which afford, through a free place or scholarship system, the present means of giving secondary education to children of Native schools. One hundred scholarships were being held at the end of 1907, of which forty were held by boys and the remainder by girls. Maori boys attending public schools may also, under regulations, be granted scholarships of this kind, and two were being held at the end of the year. Further, six Maori boys from Native schools and one from a public school were holding industrial scholarships and working as apprentices at various trades.

Six Maori girls are receiving training at various hospitals, with a view to their working as nurses among their own people; three of these are probationers on the hospital staff, and the others are day-pupils attending the hospitals as pupils from one or other of the boarding-schools. Three University scholarships are being held at present, one in Law, one in Arts, and one in Medicine.

The number of workshops in the village schools is now twelve, two having been closed; two more will be opened shortly. There has been an increase also in the number of schools at which instruction in domestic duties is given, and elementary practical agriculture now forms a subject of instruction in Native schools, at many of which school gardens have been established.

The Native-schools code has been revised, the syllabus of instruction being amended so as to approximate to that of the public schools. It is expected that the compilation of the code in its complete form will be published shortly.