

*Classification of Pupils.*

Tables H6, H6A, H6B, and H7 give full information as to the races and classification of pupils on the rolls of the Native schools. As will be seen, 85·8 per cent. were Maoris speaking Maori in their homes, 3·5 were Maoris speaking English in their homes, and 10·7 per cent. were Europeans.

In comparing Native schools and public schools with respect to the percentages of children in the various classes it will be found that in Native schools there is a larger percentage in the lower classes. The proportion of children at the various ages corresponds, however, very closely in the two classes of schools. The following table shows in a summary form the classification of pupils in Native schools, the percentages of pupils in the various classes in public schools and in the case of Natives attending public schools being also shown for comparison :—

Classes.				Maoris attending Native Schools.	Europeans attending Native Schools.	Total attending Native Schools.	Percentage of Roll.		
							Native Schools.	Public Schools.	Natives attending Public Schools.
Preparatory	..	..	..	2,088	181	2,269	13·9	35·14	53·6
Standard I	..	..	..	591	64	655	12·7	12·90	15·5
.. II	..	..	..	635	61	696	13·4	12·75	12·2
.. III	..	..	..	522	69	591	11·4	12·14	9·3
.. IV	..	..	..	379	64	443	8·5	10·93	5·6
.. V	..	..	..	247	61	308	6·0	9·52	2·6
.. VI	..	..	..	143	46	189	3·7	6·46	1·2
.. VII	..	..	..	17	5	22	0·4	0·16	..

*Efficiency of the Schools.*

In the opinion of those qualified to judge, the Native school compares very favourably in general efficiency with the public school of similar size and similarly situated. Inspectors of public schools, who during the last two years have inspected and examined a number of Native schools, speak very highly in their reports of the work done in these schools, in some instances the general conduct of the Native schools being held up as an example to public schools. The testimony of European parents who from choice or necessity send their children to Native schools also goes to prove that the standard of merit attained in these schools in no wise falls short of that reached in public schools. In addition it should be said that, in the many instances in which the teachers enter into the true spirit of their work, the Native school, besides providing for the education of the Maori children, becomes an uplifting and generally helpful influence in the community in which it is placed.

As in 1916, the work of the inspection and examination of Native schools was carried on in 1917 by the Inspector of Native Schools assisted by the Inspectors of Public Schools, to whom was assigned a certain proportion of the schools. The following figures give an estimate of the efficiency of the schools, as judged by the Inspectors for the years 1916 and 1917 :—

				Number of Schools.	
				1916.	1917.
Very good to excellent	..	..	..	39	42
Satisfactory to good	..	..	..	65	66
Inferior to weak	..	..	..	11	10

The number of certificates of proficiency awarded was thirty-one, and of competency (S6) also thirty-one.

*Natives attending Public Schools.*

The remarks that have been made previously on the progress of Maori children attending public schools still unfortunately apply. Where no well-directed effort is made to assist them in mastering the English language the Maori