

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, 85·2 per cent. were Maoris speaking Maori in their homes, 3·1 were Maoris speaking English in their homes, and 11·7 per cent. were Europeans.

In comparing Native schools with public schools in respect to the classification of pupils it appears that in Native schools a larger proportion of the pupils are in the lower classes, and also that the average age of the children in the various classes is higher than in public schools. The difference, however, is not greater than would result naturally from the more or less irregular and nomadic habits of the Natives, and if the comparison were made with small public schools in country districts only, the difference, if any, would be much less. Compared with the Maori children attending public schools the pupils of Native schools are younger in their classes and reach higher standards.

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	2,003	179	2,182	43·1	33·83	52·1
Standard I	624	76	700	13·8	12·89	16·5
" II	586	72	658	13·0	12·70	11·9
" III	548	70	618	12·2	12·37	9·4
" IV	334	76	410	8·1	11·05	5·8
" V	250	56	306	6·1	9·75	2·9
" VI	120	53	173	3·4	7·27	1·4
" VII	7	10	17	0·3	0·14	..

Efficiency of the Schools.

As was the case in the two preceding years, the inspection and examination of Native schools were carried out by the Inspector of Native Schools, and, in certain districts, by the Inspectors of Public Schools. The reports of the Inspectors go to show that the work and condition of the schools is highly satisfactory, the schools, in the opinion of Inspectors of Public Schools, being often superior to public schools of the same size. The report of the Inspector of Native Schools, which deals critically with the treatment of all subjects of the curriculum, shows clearly that in spite of the difficulty of having a new language to teach, Native-school teachers are not regarded as having carried out their task unless results of a high standard of merit in all subjects are obtained. By the inclusion of many Native schools in the schemes of the Education Board for the instruction of agriculture, woodwork, and cookery, the pupils receive efficient teaching in these subjects. An important feature in relation to Native schools is the possibility of their not only providing for the education of the Maori children, but also of being generally a helpful and uplifting influence in the community. This ideal is realized by many of the teachers, and their splendid work during the epidemic of 1918 is an outstanding example of the good they are in the habit of doing among the Natives.

From the point of view of efficiency the Native village schools were classified as follows by the Inspectors in the years 1917 and 1918 :—

	Number of Schools.	
	1917.	1918.
Very good to excellent	42	45
Satisfactory to good	66	61
Inferior to weak	10	10

The number of certificates of proficiency awarded was thirty-seven, and of competency (S6) twenty-four.