

The total number of Maori children receiving primary education at the end of 1922, including pupils of Native village schools, mission schools, and public schools, was thus 12,441, the corresponding number for the previous year being 11,636.

Classification of Pupils.

The statistics of the classification of the pupils of Native schools show that a higher percentage of the pupils are in the lower classes than is the case in public schools, and that a proportionately smaller number of pupils reach the higher standards. Likewise, the average age of the pupils in the various classes is higher. The difference, however, is not greater than can be reasonably accounted for by the peculiar conditions of Maori life, and if the comparison were made with public schools of similar size in country districts the difference would be much less marked. A comparison of the classification of Maoris in their own schools and in the public schools shows a much smaller percentage of Maoris reaching the higher classes in public schools, and is fairly conclusive evidence of the superiority of the schools specially instituted for them in meeting the particular needs of the Maori children.

The following table shows in 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.	Pupils attending Native Schools.	Percentage of Ro.l.		
		Native Schools.	Public Schools.	Natives attending Public Schools.
Preparatory	2,803	45.5	33.5	51.2
Standard I	784	12.7	12.7	15.4
" II	686	11.1	12.4	13.1
" III	629	10.2	12.2	9.0
" IV	521	8.5	11.1	5.8
" V	376	6.1	10.1	3.6
" VI	308	5.0	7.9	1.9
" VII	54	0.9	0.1	..
Totals	6,161	100.0	100.0	100.0

General Efficiency of the Schools.

Native village schools were inspected as usual by the two departmental officers appointed to the work, and their report is to the effect that the methods of teaching followed are distinctly good in the majority of schools, the splendid progress made by the pupils being evidence of the high quality of the instruction given. The small number of less satisfactory schools are keenly criticized, and it is evident that as high a standard of merit is expected in Native schools as is reached in public schools. In a comparison between the efficiency of an average Native school and of a public school of similar size it is probable that the former would not appear at any disadvantage.

The Inspector's remarks concerning the general condition of the buildings and grounds of the majority of the schools are of a complimentary nature to teachers and pupils alike for their activity in beautifying and caring for the school surroundings and in enlisting the sympathy and assistance of the parents in the same good work. The perfect cleanliness of the interiors of the schools is commented upon, but it is stated that in many cases more could be done to make them attractive.

From the point of view of efficiency the schools were classified as follows: Very good to excellent, 45; satisfactory to good, 60; fair, 13; inferior to weak, 9.

The pupils of S6 (308 in number) were examined for the award of certificates of proficiency and competency, ninety-three of the former and forty-one of the latter class of certificate being awarded. The figures represent an improvement on the results of the previous year.

Community Interest.

In the isolated districts in which they are situated Native schools naturally form an important centre of public interest, and Native-school teachers are called upon to do a great deal for the community besides teaching their pupils the subjects