

the schoolrooms clean, the method adopted in Native schools in the direction of school-cleaning is a most satisfactory one. The cheerless and unattractive interior appearance of a good many schools must again be drawn attention to. The teachers of these schools evidently fail to recognize that such schools produce an uninspiring influence upon their pupils, and the visiting Inspectors cannot fail to contrast these schoolrooms with others which it is a delight and a pleasure to enter. As far as the grounds are concerned, it may be remarked that, while the great majority of the teachers are keen in improving and beautifying the school surroundings, a considerable number cannot be given much credit for their efforts. The teachers of the schools referred to should bear in mind that their attitude towards this aspect of their work cannot fail to affect their prospects of transfer and promotion. The educative influence upon the Maori people of well-kept buildings and grounds is non-existent in such schools, and in this respect the schools are not fulfilling an important part of their function. The unplanted and unimproved school-ground is a standing reproach to the teacher in charge.

There appears to be no reason why there should not be in each school-garden a small nursery for the propagation of trees suitable for planting in the school-grounds and at the homes of the children. In some Native schools such nurseries actually exist, and there is quite a demand for the trees. The very fine work done by the pupils and the teacher of the Awarua Native School deserves special commendation.

During the year a very considerable amount of general renovation of schools, including painting, was carried out. Teachers must be reminded once more that they are required "to effect such repairs as are required to maintain the residence, fences, and gates in good order and condition." The neglect to carry out the minor repairs eventually results in considerable expense to the Department.

ORGANIZATION, INSPECTION, METHODS OF TEACHING, ETC.

Generally speaking, the organization of the schools is very satisfactory indeed, and the work of the schools proceeds smoothly and regularly. In a number of schools, however, the head teachers do not give sufficient attention to the supervision of the work of their staffs, and they apparently consider that their business is confined to their own particular part of the school. Again, exception has occasionally to be taken to the number of pupils allocated for teaching purposes to the various members of the staff. In these instances it appears to be assumed that certain classes, irrespective of their size, must be assigned to certain teachers, the result being that there is an unequal distribution of the work, with a comparatively small number of pupils in the upper standards reserved for the head teacher. Some teachers, again, require to be reminded that they are responsible for the preparation of the schemes of work for the whole school, and that any schemes prepared by an assistant must carry the approval of the head teacher. Reference must again be made to the injudicious practice of assigning to an inexperienced assistant so important a task as the teaching of oral English to the preparatory children. This task demands the services of the most skilled assistant. It is the duty of the head teacher to so organize his school and the work of his staff that the best possible results may be obtained. In a few schools the supervision of the pupils in the playground, and also of their games, not only in the recess periods but both before and after school, does not receive sufficient attention. Supervision should be undertaken by the members of the staff in turn, and some one should always be on duty during the periods referred to.

The work of inspection and examination entailed visits to 125 Native village schools, eight mission schools, and eleven Maori secondary schools, and also visits to places from which applications for the establishment of schools had been received. The reports upon the village schools and mission schools indicate that despite the shortened year a thoroughly satisfactory standard of efficiency has been maintained in the great majority of the schools. A very satisfactory feature is the good work being done by teachers who within the last two or three years have been appointed to the Native school service. From the point of view of general efficiency the schools may be classified as follows: Excellent, 12; good to very good, 50; satisfactory to good, 40; fair, 16; weak, 10. Reference to the work done in the secondary schools is made in the section dealing with secondary education.

On the whole the methods of teaching adopted in the majority of the schools are good, and they are intelligently applied, with the result that good progress is made by the pupils. The least satisfactory results are still obtained in language-teaching, and it is particularly in this subject that teachers should make a careful study of the best methods of dealing with the subject. The schemes of work in this subject are very indefinite in regard to the work of the various classes. The work-books are now being found by the teachers to be valuable adjuncts in their work.

In the matter of the health, cleanliness, and general comfort of the pupils the great majority of the teachers take commendable interest. The Health Department provides ample supplies of medicines to Native schools, and the teachers are thus able to attend to the needs of the children and even to those of the adults. The supply of hot cocoa to the pupils during the winter months has now become a recognized custom in the majority of the schools. There is little trouble in raising the necessary funds from the parents, who are alive to the benefit their children receive.

The number of certificated teachers in Native schools is much greater than it was a few years ago, and it is gratifying to know that several teachers were successful in improving their status during the year.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Language-teaching (Oral and Written English).—As the English language is prescribed as the medium of instruction in Native schools the educational progress and advancement of the Maori child will naturally depend upon his proficiency in speaking, reading, and understanding English, and it thus becomes evident that from the point of view both of the child and the teacher the importance of language-teaching transcends that of the other subjects of the school course. If the importance of the subject were clearly realized by all Native-school teachers, and more attention given to it, a