

NATIVE-SCHOOL SURVEY.

During this year a thousand Maori pupils in ninety-two schools were tested in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic (both mechanical and problems), and in educable capacity. The report of this survey was published in the *New Zealand Education Gazette* of December, 1930.

A similar survey was undertaken in Taranaki in 1929 (November), and comparisons between the results obtained in the two surveys indicate—

“(1) *Reading*.—The Maori children of Taranaki are about a year behind the general school population in both speed and comprehension of reading, but the Maori children attending Native schools displayed surprising ability in grasping the subject-matter of the story. They not only scored better than the Maori children taught in the public schools in Taranaki, but excelled the European children of Taranaki. The fact that the latter were tested towards the end of the school year, while the Native schools were tested near the beginning of the year, makes the results all the more remarkable. The Taranaki Europeans read considerably more quickly than the Maori pupils of the Native schools.

“(2) *Number of Books read*.—The Maoris in the Taranaki schools, except for the Standard VI boys, read fewer books than the Europeans. Both Europeans and Maoris in Native schools read less.

“(3) *Writing*.—The score for speed by the Standard VI Maori boys in Native schools is the best Standard VI score made so far in a New Zealand survey. The quality, however, suffered. On the whole, both in the Taranaki and in the Native schools, the Maoris write better, but sometimes more slowly, than the Europeans.”

(The above extracts are from “School Surveys, 1927–29,” arranged by N. R. McKenzie, B.A., F.R.G.S.)

THE SYLLABUS.

As the public schools syllabus has now been in use for nearly two years in the Native schools, some estimate of the effect of its introduction may now be made.

It does not appear that any attempt to teach all the subjects prescribed for the public schools is likely to be beneficial to the Natives. The teachers are handicapped in the first place by the paramount need to teach the English language. Then they have a good deal of instruction in health hygiene, and moral teaching to give, that is not necessary in most public schools. Again, it is so advisable that an adequate amount of time should be given to manual training that there is little time available for such subjects as history and geography. In the late Native-schools syllabus the latter subject appeared only as “nature-study” and history did not appear at all.

SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Table H 3 indicates the schools at which secondary education for Maori children is provided. Of the 512 Maori children attending these schools, 174 were Government pupils. In addition, one Government pupil was in attendance at Sacred Heart College, Auckland, and also one at St. Patrick's College, Wellington.

In the girls' schools the usual very valuable social and domestic training was given, including instruction in cooking, sewing, housecraft, home nursing, &c.

In the boys' schools, particularly at Te Aute and St. Stephen's, we have pleasure in recording a very definite advance in the type of instruction made available. Practical agriculture has been developed to include a full experimental course in dairying, pig-raising, poultry, sheep-farming, fodder crops, and iron and woodwork. This realization that the type of education must vary with the stage of a people's civilization and as far as possible with the requirements of each individual student was due, and its practical expression is gratifying.

There must be provided a training for the leaders. The time has passed when the civilized man can say to any people, “Thus far and no farther,” where education is concerned. Hence, in the secondary schools like Te Aute and St. Stephen's the limits imposed twenty years ago must now be abandoned.

In addition to the agricultural course provided for the majority of the boys, a definite academic side leading to the University is necessary for the few who are capable of attaining professional status.

The functions of the secondary schools both for boys and girls are therefore twofold. In the first place a vocational and essentially practical course should be provided for the greater number of the pupils, but the provision of a definite academic course for about 10 per cent. of the pupils is necessary. This year the Department drew the attention of the Principals of the Maori secondary schools for girls to the necessity for providing a higher standard of instruction in the more formal subjects necessary for Matriculation and Teachers' Training College Entrance Examination.

The development of character is a vital requisite in all educational activities. The discipline and tone at these secondary schools is such that right habits of conduct and personal hygiene are well established, and must be far reaching in their effect on the general welfare of the race.