

REPORTS OF EDUCATION BOARDS FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1885.

[NOTE.—Minute details relating to school districts are in some cases omitted. Tables are not all reprinted, the substance of most of them being embodied in the tables in or attached to the report of the Minister.]

AUCKLAND.

Auckland, 12th March, 1886.

In compliance with section 103 of "The Education Act, 1877," the Board presents the following report of its proceedings during the year 1885:—

BOARD.—The members of the Board at the beginning of the year were Mr. Samuel Luke (Chairman), Professor Aldis, Mr. James William Carr, Mr. James McCosh Clark, Mr. Theophilus Cooper, Mr. David Goldie, Mr. William Pollock Moat, M.H.R., Mr. Frederick Joseph Moss, M.H.R., and Professor Tucker. In March, 1885, Mr. Moss retired, and Mr. John Henry Upton was elected in his stead. In August Professor Tucker resigned his seat, in view of his projected departure for Melbourne, and Mr. James Marshall Lennox was elected to fill the vacancy. In September Professor Aldis resigned his seat owing to ill-health, and Mr. Frank Lawry was elected without a contest to fill the vacancy. The three members who retired in March, 1886—Mr. Goldie, Mr. Lennox, and Mr. Luke—have been re-elected without opposition. At the annual election in the month of April Professor Aldis was chosen to act as Chairman. He filled the office until July, when ill-health obliged him to resign it. Mr. Upton was appointed to succeed him, but, after a few weeks, was compelled by illness to vacate the office. Mr. Luke was then reappointed as Chairman until April, 1886. Forty-six meetings of the Board were held during the year, with an average attendance of six members.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS.—The number of schools in operation during the whole or any part of the year was 236, or, reckoning two half-time schools as one school, 210. The number of school districts was 182. New schools were opened at Babylon (near Helensville), Mangawai Beach (half-time), Kawhia, Opuawhango (half-time), Papakura Valley No. 2, Taotaoroa (two half-time schools), and Taupo (aided). Schools previously closed at Huia, Pakiri, Ruapuke, and Waipu Cave were reopened; and the schools at Kumeu, Omaru, and Tryphena were closed, but the last-named school has since been reopened. Forty-eight schools were combined together as half-time, and since January, 1886, ten more schools have been similarly dealt with. Notwithstanding what has been done in extending the half-time system, there remain more than sixty schools in operation having an average attendance under twenty-five. Many of these schools are situated in remote districts, where the population is sparse and beyond reach of any other existing school. The maintenance of these schools is a serious drain upon the funds of the Board, which are derived solely from a capita-tion grant earned by the number of attendances.

TEACHERS.—The staff of teachers in 1884 was 593; at the end of 1885 the number had increased to 648—namely,—

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Head teachers	170	46	216
Assistant teachers	34	128	162
Pupil-teachers	9	205	214
Sewing-teachers	...	49	49
Visiting teachers	7	...	7
	220	428	648

Under the title of "assistant teachers" are included fifty probationers or teachers in training. In accordance with the requirements of section 45 of the Act, a preference of employment is given to certificated teachers; but there are still forty uncertificated teachers in charge of schools, many of which are too small to retain the services of a certificated teacher.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—The number of pupil-teachers has increased from 187 to 214, of whom only nine are males. The supply of female pupil-teachers is now considerably in excess of the demand. An entrance examination (equivalent to that of the Sixth Standard) has to be passed by each candidate for employment; and a medical examiner is employed to examine and report upon the physical fitness of each candidate for the work of teaching. Pupil-teachers are employed at a minimum age of sixteen years, and are required to serve for three months on probation before being formally indentured. The following table shows the results of the annual examination of pupil-teachers and candidates held in July last:—

Grade.	Examined.			Passed.			Failed.		
	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
First-year pupil-teachers	2	56	58	2	39	41	...	17	17
Second-year pupil-teachers	3	64	67	3	46	49	...	18	18
Third-year pupil-teachers	...	7	7	...	7	7
Candidates for employment	...	12	12	...	4	4	...	8	8
Totals ...	5	139	144	5	96	101	...	43	43