

REPORTS OF EDUCATION BOARDS.

AUCKLAND.

Auckland, March, 1895.

In accordance with section 102 of "The Education Act, 1877," the Board presents the following report for the year ending 31st December, 1894:—

BOARD.—At the beginning of the year the Board consisted of the following members: Messrs. W P Buckhurst, T Cooper, A. Grant, M.A., W Lambe, S. Luke, W P Moat, J Muir, R. Udy, and H. Wilding. Mr. Buckhurst resigned his seat in February, and Mr. W Woodward was elected in April to fill the vacancy. Mr Grant retired in March, and his place was filled by the Rev J Bates. Of the members who retire in March, 1895, Messrs. Luke and Woodward have been re-elected, and Mr A. R. Harris has been elected to succeed Mr Wilding. Thirty-nine meetings of the Board were held during the year, with an average attendance of seven members. Leave of absence was granted to Mr. Moat on account of continued illness, which has now ended in his death. The Board holds the highest opinion of his personal worth and of the services rendered by him to the cause of education during the past seventeen years.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS.—Twenty new schools were opened during the year—viz., Maramarua North, Maramarua South, Kennedy Bay,* Brooklyn, Kaikohe, Maketu* (East Coast), Waitakerai, Muriwai,* Owaiwa, Ngararatunua, Papakura Valley No. 2, Ruth's Island,* Taupo,* Wairoa South No. 2, Mokau,* Hellyer's Creek, Okahu, Kiripaka, Tangiteroria, and Turanga Creek No. 2. Those marked with an asterisk are aided schools. The aided school at Sandspit (Wairoa) was closed in consequence of decreased attendance, and the Big Omaha School was closed in view of the removal of the building to a more suitable site. At the end of the year there were in operation 326 schools, or, counting every two half-time schools as one school, 309. Of this number, sixty-nine had an average attendance of less than twenty. In more than two-thirds of the schools of this district the cost of maintenance exceeds the income derived from the capitation grant. The Board is anxious to encourage settlement by placing a school where an average of ten scholars can be maintained, but, as a rule, no outlay is incurred in building unless there are twenty or more children of school age.

TEACHERS.—The number of teachers has increased from 747 to 766, viz. Head teachers—206 males, 103 females; assistant teachers—24 males, 123 females, pupil-teachers—57 males, 195 females, sewing teachers—58 females making a total of 287 males and 479 females. All teachers above the rank of pupil-teacher are certificated except nine who are classified partial E (or D), and three who are not yet classified. There are now seventy certificated ex-pupil-teachers under the Board waiting promotion to higher rank, and there are about a hundred and forty qualified candidates unemployed. The number of new pupil-teachers taken into the service during last year was less than forty. The Board therefore will not admit new candidates to the examination to be held in June next, but will re-examine those who have already passed, in order to select such number as may be required. A new scheme for the employment and training of pupil-teachers is under consideration. It is proposed that the term of service shall be extended to four years, and that the course of instruction shall lead up to the requirements for Class D.

ATTENDANCE.—There has been an increase of over a thousand in the average attendance. The operation of "The School Attendance Act, 1894," will most likely produce a further increase during the ensuing year. A truant officer is employed for the city and suburban districts, who is also authorised to act for the Committees of those districts. There were 642 scholars over school age in attendance at the end of the year, and the number of Maori and half-caste scholars was 717.

CLASS X.—More than six hundred scholars had passed Standard VI. at the end of the year. The Board considers the position of Class X as at present constituted to be unsatisfactory. Some of the scholars have been over the work prescribed for Standard VI three, or even four, times, and their presence in the class is detrimental to those who are for the first time preparing for that standard, besides often being an embarrassment to the teachers. The Board hopes that something may be done to remedy these objections.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—Eighteen senior and thirty-eight junior scholarships were held during the year. The reports of the scholars were very satisfactory. The regulations have been amended with a view of increasing the number of scholarships.

BUILDINGS.—The funds at the disposal of the Board for building purposes were inadequate to the growing requirements of the district. Notwithstanding the utmost care and economy in the expenditure, the Board has been obliged to postpone many necessary buildings and improvements. A considerable outlay was found to be necessary in improving the drainage of many of the buildings. The buildings, being with one exception constructed of wood, are beginning to show signs of decay, and some will have to be replaced with new structures at an early date. The Board therefore impresses on Government the absolute need of more liberal provision being made for this purpose.

FINANCE.—The receipts from all sources amounted to £97,361 6s. 10d., and the expenditure to £92,277 12s. 4d., leaving a balance of £5,083 14s. 6d. unexpended at the end of the year. The expenditure on maintenance for the twelve months exactly balances the capitation grant earned by the average attendance during the same period, thus Teachers' salaries, £3 3s. 5d. a head, grants to Committees, 7s. 10½d. a head, inspection and examination of schools, 1s. 9½d., expenses of Board and departmental management, 1s. 11d. total, £3 15s. per head.†

† The cost per head according to the capitation grant actually received within the twelve months was as follows: Teachers' salaries, £3 4s. 4d.; Committees, 8s., inspection, &c., 1s. 10d.; expenses of Board, 1s. 11½d.: total, £3 16s. 1½d. per head.