

## REPORTS OF EDUCATION BOARDS.

[Details are in some cases omitted.]

### AUCKLAND.

Auckland, March, 1899.

IN compliance with section 102 of "The Education Act, 1877," the Board presents the following report of its proceedings for the year 1898:—

**BOARD.**—The members in office during the year were Messrs. L. J. Bagnall, T. Cooper, A. R. Harris, R. Hobbs, S. Luke, J. Muir, J. R. Reed, R. Udy, J. H. Wright, and R. Farrell, who succeeded Mr. Harris in April. Twenty-seven meetings of the Board were held during the year, the average attendance being (nearly) eight out of nine members. A committee of four members (Messrs. Farrell, Muir, Udy, and the Chairman) met every fortnight to deal with matters of finance, and with the selection of teachers for appointment. The members to retire at the 31st March, 1899, were Mr. Cooper, Mr. Udy, and Mr. Wright. Mr. Cooper has been re-elected. The other two seats will be occupied by Dr. A. McArthur and Mr. William Leys. Mr. Udy (who did not seek re-election) retires after a continuous service of nearly thirteen years, including five years' duties as Chairman of the Board. Mr. Wright has served on the Board since June, 1895.

**SCHOOLS.**—Three hundred and seventy-two schools were in operation during the year. The number of schools open at the end of 1898 was 369, of which forty-six were half-time schools. Fifteen new schools were opened—viz., Ohacawai, Komata, Tokatea, Paiaka and Pah (half-time), Whakahara (aided), Paemako, Broadwood (aided), Katikati No. 1 and Bowentown (half-time), Pouto Point (aided), Golden Cross and Maratoto (half-time), Tapuwai, Great Barrier Island (itinerant), and Ruakaka (half-time with Mata). The schools closed during the year were Tauranga No. 2 (upon the removal of the building to a central site), Harafonga and Mangate (Great Barrier Island), Kowhai (half-time with Hukatere), Upper Waihou, and Pepepe (aided). The two last named have since been reopened.

The number of schools (369), including forty-six half-time schools, is reckoned in the departmental returns as 346. Of this number no fewer than 152 have an average attendance less than twenty-five. Between twenty-five and fifty (average) there are 101 schools; between fifty and one hundred (average) there are forty-four schools; and only forty-nine schools—or about 14 per cent. of the whole number—have an average attendance of one hundred or more scholars. In fully four-fifths of the schools of this district the income derived from the statutory capitation grant upon average attendance is insufficient to defray the cost of maintenance. The Board continues to grant aid in all possible cases where there are children beyond reach of a school, and where the residents undertake to provide board and lodging for a teacher. The gradual increase in the number of schools—over sixty since 1893—has necessitated the appointment of a sixth Inspector.

**TEACHERS.**—What has been stated above regarding the number of small schools is sufficient to account for the large proportion of teachers to the number of scholars in this district. The number of teachers at the end of 1898 was 867, classified as follows: Head teachers, 346; assistant teachers, 194; pupil-teachers, 250; sewing teachers, 77: the total comprising 321 males and 546 females. The number of teachers (above the rank of pupil-teacher) who are not certificated is twenty, of whom two hold the Minister's "License to teach," and eleven have obtained partial classification in Classes D or E. They are mostly employed in positions of small emolument or so remote as to afford little inducement to a certificated teacher.

The pupil-teachers are classified as follows: First year, 39; second year, 71; third year, 65; ex-pupil-teachers, 75: total, 250. There is still a large number of unemployed candidates attending schools for practice in teaching; and the number of candidates for employment is in excess of the demand at the present time. The large number of ex-pupil-teachers indentured under regulations prior to the scheme now in operation is being gradually reduced. These ex-pupil-teachers are retained for a full term of six years—i.e., three years above and beyond the period for which they were originally indentured—after which they become eligible for appointment to positions as teachers or assistants. Hitherto suitable employment has been found for all.

Appointments to positions above the rank of pupil-teacher are generally made in the following manner: Upon a vacancy occurring, the Board submits to the School Committee of the district the name or names of one, two, or three teachers, with particulars as to their classification, teaching skill, and experience. If more than one name is submitted, the selection of a teacher is left to the School Committee. If the Committee should recommend the appointment of some other teacher for the position, the Board generally accedes to their recommendation, if it can be done without injury to the service, and without injustice to the claims of the teacher or teachers nominated by the Board for the appointment. Where the appointment is of an approximate value of £200 a year, applications for the position are generally invited by advertisement from teachers of a certain stated classification. From the list of candidates the Board selects five or six names (according to merit), and submits those names to the School Committee for their selection of a candidate therefrom. It is a rule of the Board that, in consulting Committees in connection with the appointment of teachers, only the names of applicants who are best qualified for the position, and who stand as nearly as possible on a level as regards qualifications, shall be sent on at the same time.