

4. The admission into the secondary schools of a number of dull or idle children above the average age as free pupils will certainly lower the standard of higher education.

5. It is the opinion of this Board that any one who cannot win a free place under the present liberal regulations would be better employed learning a trade than attempting secondary education.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary for Education, Wellington.

W. WALLACE KIDD, Secretary.

THAMES HIGH SCHOOL.

SIR,—

Office of the Board of Governors, Thames, 7th July, 1904.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your circular letter of the 26th May last, forwarding copy of a letter from the Otago High Schools Board, with reference to the age-limit for admission to free places under the Secondary Schools Regulations.

The Board has given the matter its consideration, and I am instructed to convey to you its opinion thereon as follows: "That this Board is of opinion that the regulations with regard to the admission of free scholars are entirely satisfactory as applied to town schools, but that special regulations should be framed by the Education Department to meet the disability under which pupils of country schools are no doubt placed with regard to the age-limit."

Yours, &c.,

The Secretary for Education, Wellington.

JAS. KERNICK, Secretary.

NEW PLYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 2nd June, 1904.

In reply to your circular dated the 26th May, I have pleasure in handing you the following resolution which was passed at the meeting of the Board on the 1st instant: "That, in reply to the letter from the Secretary for Education, the Board has no recommendation to make extending the age beyond fourteen; but would suggest that the regulations be altered so as to allow a child to enter who has passed Standard VI. under the age of fourteen, though it may be over the age of fourteen on the 31st of the following December."

Yours, &c.,

The Secretary for Education, Wellington.

WALTER BEWLEY, Secretary.

WANGANUI HIGH SCHOOL.

SIR,—

Office of the Board of Governors, Wanganui, 22nd July, 1904.

I have the honour to state that your letter of the 26th May, and the copy of a letter received from the Board of Governors of the Otago High Schools, were considered by this Board at its meeting on the 18th instant.

In reply thereto, I am directed to inform you that the Board passed the resolutions a copy of which is sent herewith.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, Education Department, Wellington.

W. J. CARSON, Secretary.

[Enclosure.]

COPY OF RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE BOARD AT ITS MEETING ON THE 18TH INSTANT.

(1.) That the standard of proficiency for admission to secondary or district high schools should be Standard V., and not Standard VI, as at present.

(2.) That with regard to gaining the certificate for this standard, and hence with regard to admission to secondary or district high schools, no age-limit should be imposed; and that whether the child pass late or early it should be eligible for admission.

(3.) That in respect of pupils who gain the certificate of proficiency for Standard V., and who are desirous of entering a secondary or district high school, their parents should enter into an agreement with the controlling authority to allow their children to remain at some secondary or district high school for a period of not less than two years.

WANGANUI COLLEGIATE SCHOOL.

SIR,—

Bishopscourt, Wellington, 27th July, 1904.

I wish to apologize sincerely for the long delay that has taken place with regard to your letter of the 26th May last, enclosing a copy of a communication from the Board of Governors of the Otago High Schools.

Your letter appears to have been sent to Wanganui, to the headmaster. It did not reach me until four or five days ago.

The headmaster, Mr. W. Empson, writes as follows: "The enclosed circular I mislaid, and have recently rediscovered. I had better send it on to you with my opinion, which is not worth very much. Of course it does not actually concern us at present, as we have no free scholars under the Act, but if we were interested I should say that fourteen was a very reasonable age, and that any possible cases of hardship would be amply met by the suggestion under head 6 in the circular."

May I ask you to be so good as to regard this as the answer of our Board of Governors to your inquiries.

I have, &c.,

FREDERIC WELLINGTON,

Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Wanganui Collegiate School.

The Secretary for Education, Wellington.