

APPENDIX C.

REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS, 1912.

AUCKLAND.

SIR.—

Education Office, Auckland, 31st March, 1913.

We have the honour to submit for the year 1912 our annual report on the public schools of the Auckland Education District, as well as on those private schools whose inspection was undertaken by the Board in compliance with clause 170 of the Education Act.

At the close of the year the number of public schools in operation was 594, being an increase of twenty-three since the previous year. Twenty-four Roman Catholic diocesan schools, seven other private schools, and the Anglican Orphan Home were also inspected.

The following is a summary of results for the whole district :—

Classes.	Number on Roll.	Present at the Annual Examination.	Average Age of Pupils in each Class.
Standard VII	321	259	Yrs. mos. 15 1
" VI	2,545	2,368	14 1
" V	3,722	3,616	13 4
" IV	4,580	4,476	12 5
" III	5,101	4,950	11 6
" II	5,370	5,201	10 5
" I	5,658	5,421	9 4
Preparatory	17,763	16,595	7 3
Totals	45,060	42,886	9 10

This table shows an increase for the year of 2,676 on the roll number, and 2,649 on the number present at the annual examination. The total enrolment in the Roman Catholic diocesan schools and the Anglican Orphan Home was 3,140; of these, 2,997 were present at the annual examination. The number of pupils on the roll of other private schools inspected was 533.

Toward the close of the year, 2,452 candidates from the public schools, exclusive of absentees, sat for Standard VI certificates. Of these, 1,998, or 81 per cent., obtained certificates of proficiency, and 235, or 9 per cent., certificates of competency. From the Roman Catholic schools 158 candidates were presented for Standard VI certificates, ninety-five (60 per cent.) obtaining certificates of proficiency, and thirty (19 per cent.) certificates of competency.

With few exceptions, all schools were visited twice during the year. Pressure of work, arising largely through the general advance made by the district, prevented our paying the customary visits in every case. About the middle of the year Mr. T. F. Warren and Mr. F. H. Brown came to our assistance, and towards the close of the year the services of Mr. N. R. McKenzie, who has since joined the inspectorial staff, were gladly accepted. These gentlemen carried out the responsible and arduous duties with which they were entrusted to the entire satisfaction of all concerned.

Standard of Attainments.—Notwithstanding all that has been said about our primary-school system and its products, we are of opinion that the general level of attainments reached by pupils in the various classes has steadily risen; and that the finished primary-school product has been trained in habits of industry and steady application, has had his intelligence and his powers of observation strengthened and quickened, has been taught how to extend and amplify his knowledge, and, in general, has been carefully prepared for the work that awaits his coming.

Children in Dairying Districts.—We would again draw attention to the very serious disadvantages under which many children suffer that live in dairying districts. It not infrequently happens that such children are obliged to work so hard, both before and after school, that they are quite unfitted to undertake profitably the work demanded in the school, with the result that their physical as well as their intellectual development is grievously retarded. It is to be regretted that parents, and the community generally, do not recognize these facts, and are not more fully alive to their duties and responsibilities. To exact from children labour so continuous that the bloom and vivacity of childhood lingers but a few short years, and leaves behind it prematurely tired little men and women—a sight unpleasant to behold in so young and promising a country—is an irremediable wrong to the children and a menace to the welfare of the State.

Promotion of Pupils.—The classification and promotion of pupils is, in general, carefully determined. In the larger schools especially the degree of discretion shown in this direction is most gratifying. In the smaller schools, however, the same careful selection is not always shown. To promote pupils before they have thoroughly mastered the work of the class in which they have spent the year is obviously to the detriment of the pupils themselves, and may very seriously affect their future progress. Attention is again drawn to the remarks which were made under this heading in our report for 1910.