

APPENDIX B.

REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS, 1916.

AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

Auckland, 31st January, 1917.

We have the honour to submit for the year 1916 our annual report on the public primary schools of the Auckland Education District, and on those private schools whose inspection was undertaken by the Department.

At the close of the year the number of public schools in operation was 630, a decrease of thirteen on the previous year, owing mainly to the transference of twenty-one schools to the Taranaki District and eight schools to the Wanganui District, as a result of the changes brought about by the recent readjustment of education districts. Thirty Native schools, thirty-one Roman Catholic diocesan schools, and nine other private schools were also inspected.

The following table gives the number on the roll and the number present at the annual examination in the case of each class of the public primary schools:—

					Number on Roll.	Present at Annual Examination.
Standard VII	...	...	...	...	372	310
„ VI	...	...	...	...	3,135	3,024
„ V	...	...	...	...	4,353	4,234
„ IV	...	...	...	...	5,231	5,114
„ III	...	...	...	...	5,767	5,603
„ II	...	...	...	...	6,272	6,021
„ I	...	...	...	...	6,817	6,480
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	19,063	17,500
					<hr/> 51,010	<hr/> 48,286

This table shows a decrease for the year of 303 on the roll number, and 618 on the number at the annual examination. The total enrolment in the Roman Catholic Schools was 3,849, of whom 3,609 were present at the annual examination.

During the year, but chiefly towards its close, a total number from all schools of 3,574 candidates were examined for Standard VI certificates; of these, 2,477 obtained certificates of proficiency and 569 certificates of competency, five of the latter securing merit endorsement. This result shows that of those examined 69 per cent. obtained proficiency and 16 per cent. obtained competency certificates.

Nearly all schools were visited twice during the year. The demands of duties elsewhere and the closing of schools, or the absence of teachers when Inspectors happened to be in the neighbourhood of their schools, prevented our paying two visits in every case.

About the middle of the year Mr. Warren, who had already enlisted for military service, was transferred to Hawke's Bay for a few weeks prior to going into camp. Since Mr. Warren's appointment to the inspectorate he has rendered highly efficient service, and all who know him, though greatly appreciating his sense of duty and patriotic spirit, will regret his absence from a field of activities in which he has been such a conspicuous success. Towards the end of the year Mr. Alexander McGregor, headmaster of the Whangarei School, came to our assistance for a short time, and carried out the duties of inspection with much care and thoroughness.

GENERAL.

Buildings.—A good deal of attention of late years has been directed to school buildings with special reference to ventilation. So important has this phase of education become that we hear much nowadays of the "open-air school," opinion in some quarters expressing itself in terms highly condemnatory with regard to even the more modern building. A good deal of misconception still exists as to the term "open-air school." There are, of course, such schools, but these are almost entirely confined to the needs of physically defective children, who require special treatment under special conditions. It is impossible to get rid of the necessity for class-rooms of some kind, and what is really meant by an open-air school is a building admitting the maximum amount of fresh air. The planning of such a building presents considerable difficulty, and if it consists of a number of connected class-rooms, obviously, the majority of these cannot be open on more than two sides. The importance of fresh air in the case of children, however, is so great that no effort should be spared to secure a plentiful supply in all cases, and we would do well to ask ourselves if the type of building hitherto considered as satisfactory should not give place to something more in keeping with modern requirements. We note with satisfaction that