

we feel bound also to express our high appreciation of the meritorious service and loyal co-operation of the teachers as a body in our efforts to maintain the educational efficiency of the district.

We have, &c.,

F. H. BAKWELL,  
F. G. A. STUCKEY,  
D. A. STURROCK,  
W. H. GOULD, } Inspectors.

The Director of Education, Wellington.

### NELSON.

SIR,—

Nelson, 12th March, 1918.

We have the honour to present our annual report on the schools of the Nelson Education District for the year 1917.

During the last quarter of the year 119 schools were at work, the number including four half-time schools reckoned as two. There were also nine side schools, Rahui (previously attached to Charleston) having been closed. 115 schools were inspected by us, in most cases more than once, those unvisited having been opened since the Inspector's visit to their part of the district. With the addition of the nine side schools, four secondary classes at district high schools, and sixteen private and miscellaneous schools, 144 school establishments in all came under inspection.

*Private Schools.*—The roll number of the private and special schools inspected was 957, of which number 932 were present at the annual examination. In all seventy-six pupils were presented for the Sixth Standard examination, and thirty-three proficiency and eighteen competency certificates were obtained. The preparatory divisions at the Nelson Boys' and Girls' Colleges were also inspected, and candidates for certificates were examined by us. The roll number was fifty-two, fifty-one being present at the examination. Including twelve from the upper school, there were in all twenty-two candidates for certificates, and fourteen proficiency and five competency certificates were gained.

The efficiency of the work of these different schools, of which the total roll number is 1,009, is briefly summarized in the following estimate: Four schools good, three schools satisfactory to good, seven schools satisfactory, two schools fair to satisfactory.

*Public Schools.*—The number on the rolls of the public schools of the district has also increased, the average weekly roll for September quarter being 6,967. In regularity of attendance a great improvement has been made, the average attendance for the year, 6,217, being 89·7 per cent. of the average weekly roll, almost as high as any previously recorded in this district. The percentage for the whole Dominion last year was 88·6, being lower than usual on account of the prevalence of epidemics. The following details of classes are supplied from the Inspectors' annual return:—

	Number on Roll.	Present at Annual Examination.
Standard VII ... ..	144	138
"    VI ... ..	532	523
"    V ... ..	667	653
"    IV ... ..	767	757
"    III ... ..	813	804
"    II ... ..	875	858
"    I ... ..	863	845
Preparatory ... ..	2,338	2,274
Totals for 1917 ... ..	6,999	6,852
Totals for 1916 ... ..	6,881	6,437

Increase is most apparent in S6 and S1. Owing to the absence of any general epidemic this year the number present at examination shows a decided improvement. There is still a great leakage of numbers between S2 and S6, markedly increasing in proportion as the higher standards are reached. The number in S7 consists mainly of the secondary-class pupils of the four district high schools, and is comparatively small, as a large proportion of those gaining proficiency certificates annually pass on to secondary or technical schools. The proportion of children retained in the preparatory class shows further diminution, representing now 33·4 per cent. of the total roll.

The following is a general summary of results of examinations:—

	Number presented.	Proficiency Certificates.	Competency Certificates.	*Endorsed Competency.	Failures.
Primary-school pupils .. ..	537	309 (57%)	116 (21%)	18	112
Private-school pupils .. ..	65	29 (44%)	14 (21%)	5	22
Miscellaneous .. ..	33	18 (54%)	8 (24%)	..	7

\* Included in number of competency certificates.