

APPENDIX B.

ABRIDGED REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS, 1918.

AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

Auckland, April, 1919.

We have the honour to submit our annual report for the year 1918 on the public primary schools of the Auckland Education District, and on those private schools, practically all of which are registered, whose inspection was undertaken by the Department.

At the close of the year the number of public schools in operation was 652, an increase of eleven on the previous year. In addition to the public schools, thirty-three Roman Catholic diocesan schools and sixteen other private schools were also inspected.

The following table gives, in the case of the public primary schools, the number on the roll before the schools were closed in consequence of the epidemic, also the estimated number that would have been present had the annual examination been held. In a very large percentage of schools no annual examination was held, as the schools were closed.

				Number on Roll.	Estimated Number present.
Standard VII	476	} This represents same percentage as last year.
„ VI	...	...	...	3,528
„ V	...	...	...	4,820
„ IV	...	...	...	5,677
„ III	...	...	...	6,584
„ II	...	...	...	6,784
„ I	...	...	...	6,879
Preparatory	18,969	
Totals...	53,717	51,296

This table shows an increase on the enrolment for the year of 1,066. The total enrolment in the Roman Catholic diocesan schools was 4,402, and in the other private schools 794.

During the year 2,877 certificates of proficiency and 409 certificates of competency in the work of S6 were issued in the case of candidates from the public schools, and 296 certificates of proficiency and 44 certificates of competency in the work of S6 in the case of those from private schools. Some twelve holders of certificates of competency in the work of S6 successfully applied to have their certificates endorsed.

The Epidemic.—Early in November it was found necessary to close the schools in this district in consequence of the epidemic, from the effects of which so many teachers and pupils were suffering. One result of this was that a considerable number of schools were visited only once, and some were not visited at all. A very large number of teachers took an active part in assisting in the work connected with the epidemic and helped very materially in the efforts that finally brought about its suppression.

Uncertificated Teachers.—In this large and growing district it is still necessary to employ a considerable number of uncertificated and inexperienced teachers, whose influence on the school community must necessarily leave much to be desired. These conditions, which have always obtained more or less, have gradually become more pronounced during the progress of the war, so that at present it is no exaggeration to say that a relatively large percentage of our teachers are inefficient. The spread of settlement is making constant demands on educational resources, and if these are not very materially strengthened in the near future the outlook in regard to efficient training in backblock districts will be the reverse of promising. Now that the war is over our soldier teachers will soon be returning, and we may reasonably expect an appreciable accession of teaching-strength. But war experience will hardly stimulate recruiting for the ranks of teachers, so that we may lose the services of a number of young men who under normal conditions would probably have become junior teachers or probationers. More than ever is it necessary to establish training and practising schools for inexperienced teachers, or to arrange for some system of supervision by which the work of guiding and directing teaching-effort may be undertaken by competent authority. This work the Inspector is unable to do, for his energies are so fully occupied in discharging the duties of inspection in connection with the large number of schools he is required to supervise that there is but little time for other activities. The matter of securing efficient teaching for the country child is one of very real importance and of very real difficulty. The town school will always attract the better type of teacher; it is the country school whose outlook is so discouraging. During the year quite a number of teachers refrained from applying for country appointments carrying relatively large salaries, but readily accepted positions in the larger centres though the salaries attached to these were by comparison considerably smaller. We are of opinion that the country school in outlying districts will fail to attract a good type of teacher until the position is made more attractive—*i.e.*, until the salary attached thereto is very substantially increased.