

1878.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

(Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.)

MY LORD,—

Office of the Department of Education,
June 30th, 1878.

I have the honor, in accordance with the provisions of "The Education Act, 1877," to submit to your Excellency the following report upon the progress and condition of public education in New Zealand during the year ended the 31st day of December, 1877.

I have, &c.,

J. BALLANCE,

Minister of Education.

His Excellency the Most Hon. the Marquis of Normanby, G.C.M.G.,
Governor of New Zealand.

REPORT.

THIS report relates to a period during which the management of the public elementary schools was provided for by a merely temporary measure, and educational affairs were consequently in a somewhat unsettled and unsatisfactory condition.

The public schools in the several provincial districts had been conducted under systems differing widely from one another in many respects, and it was to be anticipated that some difficulty would be experienced in obtaining for the past year information of a uniform and thorough character as regards the attendance of pupils, financial arrangements, and other particulars. The fulness and care, however, with which the several Education Boards have prepared the returns for their respective districts enable me to present a large amount of useful and interesting information relating to the public schools of the colony.

As the Education Act only came into full operation at the beginning of the present year, twelve months will necessarily elapse before a report can be furnished on the progress and condition of education in New Zealand as affected by that important measure.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.

The number of public schools reported as having been in operation under Education Boards during the whole or a portion of the year 1877 is 730. Returns of the attendance in regard to 708 schools or school districts only have been