

1880.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION.

REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS.

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

(It has not been thought necessary in all cases to print those portions of the Inspectors' reports which relate only to particular schools.)

AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

I have the honor to submit the following report for the year ended 31st December, 1879 :—

The number of primary schools in the education district in the first quarter of 1879 was 186; in the second, 196; in the third, 199; and in the fourth quarter, 202. The number of schools taught half-time was 29. The attendance of the pupils is shown in the following table :—

Quarter ending	Number of Schools.	Roll Number.			Average Attendance.		
		M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
March 31 	186	6,272	5,500	11,772	5,096	4,401	9,497
June 30 	196	6,657	5,904	12,561	5,309	4,510	9,819
September 30 	199	6,865	6,039	12,904	5,345	4,491	9,839
December 31 	202	7,334	6,625	13,959	5,711	4,977	10,688

The night schools in the December quarter were 8; average attendance, 104.

In former reports I have described the plan adopted here for the training of teachers. As the Minister of Education desires that information on the subject should be embodied in this report, I now proceed to give it.

The training of teachers is carried on by means of classes held in Auckland on two evenings of the week and on Saturdays, and by the actual work of teaching in the schools. A number of country teachers are allowed to seek improvement by means of correspondence with the masters of the training classes. Those who attend the training classes are pupil-teachers, the younger assistants, and probationers. Probationers are persons whom the Board consider likely to make useful teachers, but who have little or no experience as teachers. A few of them may be experienced teachers awaiting employment. An allowance towards his support is made to each probationer. The Saturday classes are attended by many country teachers who are unable to attend the evening classes. There are besides many pupil-teachers in the country schools. The head teachers of these schools are required to direct and assist the studies of their pupil-teachers, who come up annually for examination. The Board prepared regulations for the employment and training of pupil-teachers, which they intended to bring into force at the beginning of this year. This they have been unable to do in consequence of the regulations not being assented to by the Minister of Education.

I am very much inclined to be of opinion that the pupil-teacher system is not suited to the requirements of the day, and that it should be adopted only when the adoption is a necessity—that is, in places where classes for the instruction of young teachers cannot be formed. I think therefore that Boards should be allowed a certain amount of discretion in this matter; that it should not be made imperative on them to bring the system into operation all over their districts, whether it seems fit to them or not. I believe that the money paid to headmasters in and near large towns for instructing pupil-teachers would be much better laid out in providing classes in connection with the normal school, where one exists. Besides, the amount of study and instruction usually exacted under the pupil-teacher system would be unnecessary with the class of young people who would be pupil-teachers under the plan I shall presently submit. As regards cost, I find the allowance to the teachers of schools in and near Auckland for instructing pupil-teachers would amount to about £400 a year. Classes for their instruction could be carried on at a much less cost.