

CONFERENCE OF INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS.

A conference of Inspectors of Schools was held in 1894, and the advantages accruing from such consultation in regard to matters of common interest were so obvious that it was intended thenceforth that conferences should be held at regular intervals. Various circumstances, however, intervened to prevent the idea from being carried out, and it was not found possible to convene another conference until January of the present year, when there were present all the Inspectors of Schools of the various Education Boards except one, whose absence was due to ill-health. The Inspectors of the Education Department were also invited to the conference, at which the Inspector-General of Schools presided.

The principal subjects discussed were the regulations for the inspection and examination of public schools, the syllabus of instruction, training colleges for teachers, teachers' certificates and certificate examinations, the School Attendance Act, and higher instruction in primary schools and district high schools. Very full consideration was given to the first two subjects named, and the conclusions, arrived at with a great degree of unanimity, will be a very valuable assistance to the Department in framing new regulations. The establishment of training colleges for teachers in connection with the present university colleges was strongly recommended; and there was substantial agreement as to the necessity for making provision for the higher education of those who have passed Standard VI., although there was some difference of opinion as to the form that such instruction should take.

The conference was unanimous in urging that the age of exemption from school attendance should be raised to fourteen, and various amendments in details of the School Attendance Act were suggested. Resolutions were also passed in favour of the uniform staffing of the schools of the colony, the examination of private schools by public school Inspectors, the placing of the Inspectors under the authority of the central department, and in regard to several matters of minor importance. Finally, it was affirmed that, "to secure continuity of progress and solidarity of interest in matters educational, the Inspectors should meet in conference triennially." There is little doubt that much good resulted, not only from the discussions that took place in the meetings themselves, but also from the interchange of ideas in a less formal manner among those who, as experts, have to take a large share in directing the educational policy of the various education districts; and the recommendation that such conferences should be held at regular intervals of three years seems to be one that is worth adopting. The minutes of the proceedings of the conference appear in a special paper.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.

Table S is a summary of the accounts of the School Commissioners, which are given in full in the Appendix.

TABLE S.—SUMMARY OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS' ACCOUNTS.

Provincial Districts.	Income for the Year 1900.						
	Balances on 1st January, 1900.	Receipts during Year.				Total Income.	
		Primary Reserves.	Secondary Reserves.	Investments, &c.	Deposits.		
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Auckland	1,447 4 8	2,741 9 11	673 2 8	47 15 4	58 16 0	4,968 8 7	4,968 8 7
Taranaki	1,210 11 9	2,619 0 2	503 5 7	9 14 3	..	4,342 11 9	4,342 11 9
Wellington.. ..	181 8 0	3,563 7 8	746 2 0	151 15 3	..	4,642 12 11	4,642 12 11
Hawke's Bay ..	3,224 16 2	3,045 5 6	811 7 2	75 3 7	..	7,156 12 5	7,156 12 5
Marlborough ..	605 14 8	252 2 6	36 10 0	17 2 0	..	911 9 2	911 9 2
Nelson	20 12 0	1,042 2 8	374 2 2	..	..	1,436 16 10	1,436 16 10
Westland	387 9 3	17 5 0	402 6 2	4 10 0	..	811 10 5	811 10 5
Canterbury.. ..	933 16 11	16,648 9 3	..	4 17 9	..	17,587 3 11	17,587 3 11
Otago	13,108 12 8	13,524 11 1	640 0 2	6,120 17 3	10 0 0	33,404 1 2	33,404 1 2
Totals for 1900..	21,120 6 1	43,453 13 9	4,186 15 11	6,431 15 5	68 16 0	75,261 7 2	75,261 7 2
Totals for 1899..	17,138 9 10	42,195 5 1	4,797 19 2	10,589 2 3	137 16 9	74,858 13 1	74,858 13 1