

APPENDIX A.

ABRIDGED REPORTS OF EDUCATION BOARDS.

AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

Education Office, Auckland, 28th March, 1917.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, the Education Board of the District of Auckland has the honour to submit the following report for last year:—

Board.—At the election held in August the following were elected members of the Board: For the Auckland Urban Area—Mrs. R. L. Baume, Messrs. F. W. H. Brinsden, G. J. Garland, and G. W. Murray; for the North Ward—Messrs. J. D. McKenzie and R. C. Smith; for the East Ward—Messrs. E. C. Banks and A. Burns; for the West Ward—Messrs. W. Auld and J. Boddie. Messrs. A. R. Harris and C. T. Barriball retired. The Board regrets to report that Mr. C. T. Barriball recently died. Mr. J. D. McKenzie was elected Chairman of the Board.

Finance.—The total receipts for the year 1916 were £358,069 2s. 1d., and the expenditure was £343,338 1s. 4d., that amount being made up as follows: Teachers' salaries and house allowances, £261,863 1s. 3d.; grants to School Committees, &c., £15,191 1s. 8d.; cost of administration, £6,432 18s. 5d.; secondary education, £2,744 1s. 11d.; manual and technical instruction, £22,964 9s. 8d.; maintenance of school buildings, £13,091 18s. 9d.; new school buildings, £11,401 4s. 10d.; manual and technical buildings, £3,614 15s. 9d.; unclassified expenditure, £6,034 9s. 1d. The amount of £10,000 was recently added to the amount on fixed deposit on account of the fund for the rebuilding of worn-out schools. The amount on fixed deposit on that account is now £40,961 2s. 8d.

Buildings.—During the year fifteen new schools were built; eight were enlarged, and two schools (at Ohaupo and Puni) were built to replace those destroyed by fire. At the end of the year school was held in 492 buildings belonging to the Board and in 138 privately owned buildings. The number of teachers' residences was 205. The improvement, renovation, and larger repairs to schools continue to be undertaken by a competent staff of workmen under the direction of the architect. The smallest-sized schools, known as "shed schools," are usually erected by the Board's own workmen.

Schools.—The number of schools in operation at the end of the year was 630, being a decrease of twelve. 130 half-time schools were in operation. The Inspector's reports on the work of the half-time schools are in general very satisfactory. Owing to the alterations in the boundaries of the education district, eighteen schools in the Awakino and Ohura Counties were handed over to the Taranaki Education Board, and eight schools in the Kaitieke County were handed over to the Wanganui Board, in August last.

Attendance.—The number of scholars on the roll at the end of last year was—Boys, 26,199; girls, 24,132; total, 50,331. This represents a decrease for the year of 569. The average attendance for the year was 43,850, being a decrease of 1,027.

Teachers.—Over 230 teachers have now joined the Forces. The Board regrets to report that ten teachers have been reported killed in action. The Board continues to experience serious difficulty in staffing schools, and it has been necessary to employ, under the provisions of the War Legislation Act, many inexperienced teachers.

Relieving Teachers.—The grant for relieving teachers has again proved to be insufficient. The receipts for last year amounted to £1,156 12s. 7d., whereas the payments were £1,413 7s. 7d. The debit balance on account of relieving teachers at the end of the year was £2,483 4s. The Board grants leave of absence on account of illness to teachers, with salary, as follows: Up to five years' service—maximum, two weeks; over five and up to ten years' service—maximum, one month; over ten and up to fifteen years' service—maximum, two months; over fifteen and up to twenty-five years' service—maximum, three months; over twenty-five years' service—maximum, four months. Provision is made that, under exceptional circumstances, an extension of that scale may be granted by the unanimous vote of the members present. It is also provided that should leave of absence for one month or more have been granted to any teacher at any time that fact shall be taken into consideration in any application for future leave.

Training College.—The number of students in attendance at the beginning of last year was 121. During the absence of Mr. H. A. E. Milnes with the Forces the headmaster of the Normal School, Mr. H. G. Cousins, is acting as Principal and lecturer in education at the University College.

Manual Training.—During the year 1916 Tauranga was the only new centre opened for woodwork and cookery classes. The course of instruction at that centre was limited to three months, during which period the pupils by attending five hours weekly received the sixty hours' instruction in woodwork and cookery. This scheme proved very satisfactory, and it is the intention of the Board to establish similar courses in other country towns. There are at present sixteen manual-training schools open in the Auckland Education District, and new ones are being built at Matamata and at Te Kuiti. There are over seven thousand children in attendance at the woodwork and cookery classes.

Agriculture Instruction.—The rural course was taken by the secondary pupils at Aratapu, Pukekohe, Cambridge, Paeroa, Waihi, and Tauranga District High Schools. There are science-rooms already at Pukekohe and Waihi, and science-rooms are being erected at Paeroa and Aratapu. An application has been made to the Department for a grant in aid of erection of a science-room