

APPENDIX A.

ABRIDGED REPORTS OF EDUCATION BOARDS.

AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

Education Office, Auckland, 27th March, 1918.

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.—The members in office are: For the Auckland Urban Area—Mrs. R. L. Baume, and Messrs. F. W. H. Brinsden, G. J. Garland, and G. W. Murray; North Ward—Mr. J. D. McKenzie (Chairman) and Mr. R. C. Smith; East Ward—Messrs. E. C. Banks and A. Burns; West Ward—Messrs. J. Boddie and J. S. Bond. I regret to report that Mr. W. Auld, a member for the West Ward, died at the end of 1917. The Board places on record its appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. Auld as a member of the Board.

Schools.—At the end of last year the number of schools in operation was 641, being an increase of eleven during the year. Of those schools 126 were worked as part-time schools. In reporting upon part-time schools the Inspectors state that the main object in recommending that schools be worked half-time is not to effect saving, but to secure greater efficiency in the schools; and that the relatively high salary paid in part-time schools tends to draw a teacher of a much better class than can usually be secured for small full-time schools, and that in consequence the work in part-time schools is generally of a much higher quality than the work in Grade I full-time schools. They state further that they are of opinion that, whenever practicable, small schools should be worked as part-time schools.

Buildings.—During the year fifteen new schools were built and sixteen schools were enlarged. At the end of last year school was held in 502 buildings belonging to the Board and in 139 privately owned buildings. The number of teachers' residences was 204. Improvements, renovations, and larger repairs to schools are undertaken by a competent staff of workmen under the direction of the architect. It has been necessary to postpone as far as possible such maintenance works as are not considered very urgent, owing to the heavy cost of materials and the increasing scarcity of labour, and the fact that the cost of painting-materials, roofing-iron, &c., is now practically prohibitive, and, further, that for the most part the quality of the materials is indifferent. So soon as things become normal again the arrears of work will be overtaken as early as possible.

Attendance.—The number of scholars on the roll at the end of last year was 52,133—viz., boys, 27,166; girls, 24,967. This represents a total increase of 1,802 for the year. The average attendance for the December quarter was 47,162, and for last year the average was 45,742. At the end of last year 2,396 Maoris and half-caste scholars were enrolled.

Teachers.—The Board regrets to report that eighteen teachers have been killed in action during the year (names published in Appendix to E.—1). The number of teachers now with the Forces amounts to 300. Owing to the withdrawal of so many teachers for active service, the Board continues to experience serious difficulty in securing competent teachers to staff the schools. The Board has resolved that, in the interests of those teachers who are on active service, all appointments, as far as possible, shall be made temporary during the period of the war.

Pupil-teachers.—The Board is strongly of the opinion that the remuneration offered to pupil-teachers is insufficient to attract the best of our young people into the teaching profession. A beginner in the Public Service is paid £50 a year, plus £28 a year boarding-allowance if required to live away from home, whereas a pupil-teacher with the same qualification (*i.e.*, Intermediate Examination) is paid only £45 a year with £15 a year boarding-allowance. It is not an uncommon occurrence for a pupil-teacher or probationer to resign in order to accept appointment in the Public Service or some other calling. Three such resignations have been received during the present month. Another factor which seriously affects the admission of desirable candidates to the teaching service is the altogether inadequate remuneration paid to Training College students during the two years they are required to attend College. The experience of this Board is that some of the best pupil-teachers for financial reasons are quite unable to attend the College.

Training College.—The number of students at the end of last year was 105. Since the war began 158 students and ex-students have joined the Forces. Of those, twenty have been killed in action, and thirty-one have been wounded. The Board greatly regrets to report that the Principal, 2nd Lieutenant Herbert A. E. Milnes, who volunteered and was accepted for active service in March, 1916, was killed in action in the attack of Passchendaele Ridge, France, on the 2nd October, 1917. The Board places on record its appreciation of the very valuable services rendered by the late Mr. Milnes in the cause of education in this Dominion. His excellent qualities as a man and an educationist were very highly appreciated. His name will be remembered with