

APPENDIX B.

REPORTS (ABRIDGED) AND STATEMENTS OF ACCOUNTS OF EDUCATION BOARDS.

1. REPORTS.

AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

Auckland, 31st March, 1923.

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 the year 1923:—

Board.—The members of the Board at the end of the year were as follows: Auckland Urban Area—Mrs. N. E. Ferner, Messrs. G. Brownlee, W. J. Campbell, H. S. W. King, J. P. McPhail, and T. U. Wells; Hamilton Urban Area—Messrs. S. B. Sims and F. A. Snell; North Ward of the Rural Area—Messrs. J. D. McKenzie and V. H. Reed; East Ward of the Rural Area—Messrs. E. C. Banks and A. Burns; West Ward of the Rural Area—Messrs. J. Boddie and J. Patterson. The Board's representatives on kindred bodies were: Auckland University College Council—Mr. J. Boddie; Auckland Grammar School Board of Governors—Messrs. G. Brownlee, A. Burns, and J. P. McPhail; Seddon Memorial Technical College Board of Managers—Mrs. N. E. Ferner, Messrs. H. S. W. King and J. P. McPhail; Elam School of Art Board of Managers—Mrs. N. E. Ferner, Messrs. G. Brownlee and W. J. Campbell; Pukekohe Technical High School Board of Managers—Messrs. J. Roulston and J. B. Sim; Thames High School Board of Governors—Mr. A. Burns; Whangarei High School Board of Governors—Messrs. H. W. Crawford and J. D. McKenzie; Hamilton High School Board of Governors—Messrs. J. Primrose, F. de la Mare, and F. A. Snell; Kowhai Junior High School Committee—Mrs. N. E. Ferner, Messrs. G. Brownlee and A. Burns. The Board meets on the first and third Wednesdays in each month. Twenty-two meetings of the Board were held during the year, with an average attendance of eleven.

Schools.—The number of schools in operation at the end of last year was 736, including ninety-four half-time schools. During the year twenty-nine schools were opened and twenty-one were closed.

Attendance.—The number of scholars enrolled at the end of 1923 was 64,472—viz., boys, 33,624; girls, 30,848—being an increase of 1,562 over the number enrolled at the end of 1922. The yearly average attendance was 56,639, an increase of 1,174.

Buildings.—During the year thirty new schools were built and thirty-one schools were enlarged; four teachers' residences were also provided during the year. The grants made during the year by the Department enabled the Board to attack with more vigour the accommodation requirements of the Auckland Education District. The Board regrets, however, that in many districts the school accommodation is not yet adequate, and that congested conditions still exist. During recent years the Board has done its utmost to improve conditions, and has met the Department by making serious inroads in its Rebuilding Fund. The provision of teachers' residences is still a serious necessity in this district, especially in rural areas. The difficulty of obtaining suitable accommodation for teachers who take up positions in settlements remote from cities is still most pressing. Very little improvement was made in this respect during the course of the year. The Board considers that the question of erecting residences in rural areas should be seriously attacked immediately. The Board reports with extreme regret that during the year three schools—Waikino, Newmarket, and Epsom—were destroyed by fire. Inquiry into the origin of the fires shows conclusively that incendiarism was the cause. As a result the Board, at the instance of the Minister, took steps to ensure that vigilant supervision is exercised over wooden buildings.

Finance.—The income for the year ended 31st December, 1923, totalled £723,089 7s. 5d., and the expenditure £749,173 16s. 6d.

Maintenance Fund.—During the year the Board took steps to obtain a monthly review of the position of the Maintenance Fund, in order that expenditure might be kept within due bounds. The restoration of the 10-per-cent. deduction from the Maintenance Fund last year has enabled the Board to overtake many urgently needed works in respect of maintenance.

Training College.—During 1923 the number of students attending the Auckland Training College was 363—viz., 119 men and 244 women. The Board still continues to use the building known as the "annex" for the purpose of providing additional accommodation for the training of students. It is hoped, however, that early in 1925 the Board will be able to vacate this building. A grant has been made for the erection of a substantial part of a new Training College upon the Mount Eden - Epsom Reserve. The Hostel continues to prove a boon to many of the women students of the Auckland Training College, and is now fully occupied.

District High Schools.—The reports of Inspectors indicate that a steady and satisfactory improvement is being made in the tuition of the secondary departments of district high schools. The Board wishes to record its appreciation of the good work being done by Inspectors in connection with post-primary education. It is very largely due to their efforts that the improvement herein noted is due.