

TABLE H.—SCHOOL-BUILDINGS EXPENDITURE.

Education Districts.	No. of Schools in operation, 1879.	No. of Residences attached.	No. of Schools in buildings not belonging to Boards.	Expenditure in 1879 upon					Total.
				New Buildings.	Enlargements, Improvements, Repairs, &c.	School Furniture and Appliances not included in preceding.	Purchase of Sites.	Plans, Supervision, &c.	
				£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Auckland ...	204	70	55	19,406 6 9	3,963 10 6	2,533 19 11	1,602 7 8	1,242 7 5	28,748 12 3
Taranaki ...	27	12	2	2,223 11 8	582 8 3	288 14 10	279 5 2	59 2 3	3,433 2 2
Wanganui ...	52	37	...	5,113 9 1	4,219 19 9	1,054 1 3	216 10 0	193 8 11	10,797 9 0
Wellington ...	42	26	3	6,632 0 6	1,591 8 10	812 10 2	4,600 0 0	221 1 3	13,857 0 9
Hawke's Bay ...	33	20	8	9,397 1 6	1,104 1 7	1,047 17 6	476 0 0	385 10 9	12,410 11 4
Marlborough ...	15	13	...	694 11 4	1,173 18 0	143 1 0	275 4 2	94 3 3	2,380 17 9
Nelson ...	58	29	8	4,510 7 11	604 6 3	466 15 9	180 0 0	137 11 9	5,899 1 8
North Canterbury ...	120	114	4	7,935 19 6	11,796 0 0	1,377 18 4	1,132 10 4	1,378 3 9	23,621 0 2
South Canterbury ...	29	31	...	11,895 13 8	986 18 1	1,810 17 11	474 5 3	559 19 3	15,727 14 2
Westland ...	33	4	6	265 13 9	1,370 19 1	363 7 9	193 0 0	349 2 5	2,542 3 0
Otago ...	146	131	5	31,035 0 6	8,087 9 0	1,215 12 7	3,150 0 0	1,034 4 3	44,522 6 4
Southland ...	58	48	3	7,211 19 6	1,120 16 10	121 6 7	222 0 0	251 12 9	8,927 15 8
Totals ...	817	535	94	106,321 15 8	36,602 4 5	11,236 3 7	12,801 2 7	5,906 8 0	172,867 14 3

Table I shows that no less than £36,602 4s. 5d. had been expended on the enlargement and improvement of existing school-buildings, and that the purchase of sites had absorbed the sum of £12,801 2s. 7d. The largest expenditure on sites was in the Wellington and the Otago Districts, caused mainly by the necessity of providing additional schools in the cities of Wellington and Dunedin.

The foregoing table also furnishes information respecting the number of schools which were in operation during the year 1879, the number of residences connected with the schools, and the number of schools held in buildings not the property of the Boards. The returns show that, notwithstanding the comparatively large expenditure on school-buildings during the past three years, some of the education districts are still very inadequately provided, especially with teachers' residences. In the cities and larger towns it may not be necessary, or even advisable, for Boards to incur any outlay on account of residences; but it is evident that in most cases the want of an official residence for the teacher in a country district cannot but injuriously affect the welfare of the school.

The Education Boards, in their reports, enter with more or less fulness into the question of school-buildings, and their representations merit very careful consideration. They show the beneficial results which have followed the expenditure of the moneys granted to them during the past three years for buildings, and they also point out that much yet remains to be done, not only to place the existing school districts in a satisfactory position as regards buildings, but also to provide for numerous localities which, owing to the increase of the population or the extension of settlement, are demanding the establishment of new schools.

The apportionment of the moneys specially voted by the General Assembly for school-buildings has received very careful consideration. Although the relative population and extent of the education districts have had to be taken into account, yet, in the administration of a colonial scheme of education, it has been considered indispensable that regard should be had in a very large measure to the absolute necessities of the several districts. The intimate knowledge which has now been acquired respecting the circumstances of the several education districts has shown that while some of them, more particularly those in the South Island, had been somewhat fairly provided with school-buildings at the date of the abolition of the provinces, there were others in which a large number of the schools were held in most unsuitable buildings, many of them being rooms, halls, churches, and other places not in the ownership of the Boards. This was more particularly the case in the cities and larger towns, such as Auckland, Wellington, Napier, and New Plymouth, although the same state of matters prevailed also to a greater or less extent in the country districts. In Hawke's Bay it might be said that when the Act of 1877 came into operation accommodation had to be provided for all the school children in the district, as at that time there were only seven small schools, of no great value, that properly belonged to the Board. In the city of Wellington no school-buildings had been erected at the public cost