

(b.) SECONDARY DEPARTMENTS OF DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.

Number on roll at end of 1917	..	..	..	..	..	2,180
Mean of average weekly roll : Boys, 1,131 ; girls, 1,274 : total	..	..	..	..	..	2,405
Average attendance	..	..	..	..	..	2,201
Number of new entrants from public primary schools	..	..	..	..	..	1,392
Number of first-year pupils	..	..	..	..	..	1,152
Number of second-year pupils	..	..	..	..	..	638
Number of third-year pupils	..	..	..	..	..	390

(c.) TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS.

Number on roll at end of 1917 : Boys, 1,110 ; girls, 1,237 : total..	..	2,347
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(d.) REGISTERED PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Number on roll at end of 1917 : Boys, 394 ; girls, 812 : total	1,206
Number under twelve years of age	..	..	26
Number between twelve and fifteen years of age	..	..	343
Number over fifteen years of age	..	..	837
Number of teachers	..	..	71

(e.) SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR MAORIS.

Number on roll at end of 1917	..	..	..	..	..	487
Average attendance, 1917	..	..	..	..	..	454

The total number of children, therefore, receiving secondary education at the end of 1917 was 13,810, an increase of 6.2 per cent. over the corresponding figure for the previous year. Of 9,517 children who left the primary schools having passed S6 in 1916, 1,392 entered the secondary departments of district high schools, 2,871 secondary schools, and 1,226 technical high schools ; hence a total of 5,489 children, or 58 per cent. of those who left the primary schools having passed S6, in 1916, or 37 per cent. of the whole number that left school in that year, entered upon an education of a secondary nature at one of the types of school mentioned. In addition to those enumerated, 2,276 children proceeded from the primary schools to evening technical classes. Of these, 1,584 had passed S6 and 692 had not done so.

The average length of stay of boys at secondary schools (group (a) above) is two years and nine months, and of girls two years and eight months. The following figures show the percentage of children leaving the secondary schools at the stages indicated :—

				Boys.	Girls.
(a.)	Percentage leaving at end of first	year or during second year	..	22	20
(b.)	..	second	..	28	35
(c.)	..	third	..	24	17
(d.)	..	fourth	..	14	18
(e.)	..	fifth	..	9	6
(f.)	Percentage remaining at end of sixth year	..	..	3	4

The fact that over 20 per cent. of the pupils leave at the end of the first or during the second year is a matter for regret, as very little good can be gained from spending so short a time in the study of secondary subjects. The evil is mitigated if such pupils take what is termed a short course, in which, instead of commencing the study of a number of new subjects, including languages, they devote the time, more or less, to pursuing further subjects already begun in the primary school, or to the study of simpler subjects bearing upon the vocations they intend following. The length of time spent by pupils at the secondary departments of district high schools is for the most part short, only about one-sixth of the pupils remaining after the second year. In the case of these schools, it is recognized that pupils often attend merely with the object of finishing off their primary education, and that the number preparing for higher education or for the learned professions is small.

CURRICULUM OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.

(Tables K13 and L3.)

Although there are no departmental regulations directly governing the curriculum of secondary schools, the regulations defining the subjects of instruction to be taught to free-place holders and the prescribed syllabuses of the various public examinations to a large extent control the character of the courses of work undertaken. Amended regulations issued during the year made it compulsory