

Examined and found correct, except as follows:—

1. The following accounts<sup>7</sup> are unlawfully charged with more than the amount of the moneys provided for them—namely, House Allowance Account, New Buildings Account, Technical Fund General Account, Technical Fund New Buildings, &c., Account, and the Secondary Education Account.

2. The expenditure of £15 12s. 6d. for “Expenses, Members and Inspector attending Education Conference at Wellington,” is without the authority of law.

J. W. POYNTON,  
Deputy-Controller and Auditor.

#### MARLBOROUGH.

SIR,—

Blenheim, 31st May, 1906.

I have the honour to present the report of the Marlborough Education Board for the year ending 31st December, 1905.

**BOARD.**—At the commencement of the year the Board consisted of the following gentlemen: John Clervaux Chaytor, John Duncan, Alfred John Litchfield, Richard McCallum, William Henry Macey, William Benoni Parker, Alfred George Fell, Charles Ferguson, and John James Winsbury White. The members retiring in August by rotation (Messrs. Fell, Ferguson and Parker) were re-elected without opposition. The Board held twelve meetings during the year.

**SCHOOLS.**—The number of schools at the beginning of the year was 61; of these, 27 were in grade 0, 14 in grade 1, 6 in grade 2, 3 in grade 3, 3 in grade 4, 2 in grade 5, 2 in grade 7, 3 in grade 8, and 1 in grade 10. At the end of the year the number had increased to 67, including 5 that were temporarily closed or were working with teachers not recognised by the Board. The increase was entirely in the schools in grade 0, the number of which had increased to 38. Several fresh applications for the establishment of such schools are already spoken of, and for the reasons given in my last report it is impossible to ignore them, and thereby condemn the majority of the unfortunate children to a lifelong condition of comparative ignorance.

The spread of settlement, more particularly at Flaxbourne, has rendered it necessary to make provision for several new schools. Special grants for buildings at Grassmere, Ward, and Seaview have been made, and by the time this report reaches you that at Seaview will be finished, and contracts let for those at Ward and Grassmere. The new school at North Bank has been built, and was opened at the beginning of 1906. As a considerable number of the Flaxbourne settlers had taken up their residence soon after the allotment of the sections, the Board decided to rent a building that was available, and to open a temporary school in the Township of Ward, so that the children should not waste their time while waiting for the completion of the new building. The fitting-up of this building was completed in time to allow of the opening of the school early in January.

After some unsuccessful attempts to obtain a suitable site for the Technical School, it was ultimately resolved to erect the same on the north-western corner of the Borough School grounds, and a contract for the erection of the building was let at the end of the year.

Under the energetic management of Mr. Strachan, the Board's Inspector, a winter school for teachers was organized and set to work during the winter holidays. This was attended by nearly all the teachers of public schools in the district, and by several teachers of private schools. The Department's assistance in granting railway passes, as well as substantial aid of a pecuniary character, is gratefully acknowledged, and more especially for giving us the personal assistance of the Inspector-General and of Mr. Isaac, the Organizing Inspector. Saturday classes for teachers have been held during the year at Havelock and Blenheim; the latter were well attended by all the teachers along the line of railway, and by not a few from less favoured localities. The good effect of these classes is beginning to show itself in the ordinary work of the schools, and the Board has to thank the Inspector for the energy and perseverance with which he organized and followed them up.

The passing of the Teachers' Superannuation Act was perhaps the most noteworthy event of the year in educational matters, and will be an immense benefit to the teachers, more especially to the younger members of the profession. The Board, however, is of opinion that sufficient consideration has not been given to the cases of teachers and officers of Boards who spent their lives in the service, and would respectfully suggest that an amendment of the Act should be introduced to enable the Superannuation Board to take into account the whole length of such service, instead of limiting it to the years that have passed since the Act of 1877 came into force.

The case of our present Secretary (and former Inspector) seems to us to be specially deserving of consideration. After upwards of forty-two years of service, the Board thinks that although service has been given in three different provinces of the colony, he should be treated at least as well as he would have been had that time been completed under almost any branch of the Civil Service of the General Government.

**GENERAL MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS.**—The Board, with the view of the more economical, and at the same time more efficient administration of this fund, determined to adopt the plan of purchasing the materials direct from the importers, and employing a competent man to undertake the painting and petty repairs required throughout the district, and there is ample reason to be satisfied with the result, as it is found that, while the work is better done, the expense is considerably less than under the contract system. The following schools have been well painted and repaired during the year: Canvastown, Fairhall, Kaituna, Okaramio, Onamalutu, Rai Valley, and Renwick, at a cost in labour and material of about £180, while the Board has the satisfaction of knowing that the best materials have been used, and that the work has been thoroughly well done.