

TARANAKI.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 21st March, 1910.

In accordance with the provisions of section 174 of the Education Act, 1908, the Education Board of the District of Taranaki has the honour to submit the following report of its proceedings for the year 1909 :—

At the beginning of the year the Board was comprised of the following members : Mr. James Wade (Chairman), Messrs. G. A. Adlam, Henry Faull, W. L. Kennedy, J. Morison, Arthur Morton, William Rogers, Harold Trimble, and Gustave Tisch. Mr. Monkhouse having resigned his seat in January, an extraordinary election was held on the 9th March, 1909, resulting in the election of Mr. William Rogers. In the terms of the Education Act, 1908, the following members retired : North Ward, Arthur Morton ; East Ward, J. D. Morison ; West Ward, Gustave Tisch. Messrs. Morton and Morison offered themselves for re-election at the election held on the fourth Monday in July, and were re-elected, Mr. James Young being elected for the West Ward in Mr. Tisch's place. At the extraordinary election held on the 4th October to fill the vacancy in the North Ward caused by the death of Mr. Henry Faull, Mr. Arthur Herbert Halcombe was elected. It is with the deepest regret that I have to record the death of Mr. Henry Faull, who was the oldest member of the Board, having been elected on the 10th March, 1879, and was a continuous member from that date. Mr. Faull missed but few meetings during his whole term, and then only through illness. He was one of the most useful members the Board has had, being a thoroughly practical man. He served on various committees with conspicuous ability, and in him the Board has lost a most painstaking, hard-working member. At the meeting held on the 26th August, Mr. James Wade was re-elected Chairman ; Messrs. Adlam, Morison, and Trimble, members of the Teachers' Selection Committee ; Messrs. Kennedy, Morton, and Young, members of the Finance Committee ; Messrs. Morton, Morison, and Rogers, members of the Reserves Committee : the Chairman to be *ex-officio* member of each committee. The Board held 24 meetings—the Finance Committee, 12 ; the Teachers' Selection Committee, 8 ; and the Reserves Committee, 6.

New schools have been opened at Pukeho and Kina. At the end of the year there were ninety schools open, including eight half-time schools, and the number of teachers employed was 176—graded as follows : Sole teachers, 36 female and 12 male ; head-teachers, 13 female and 25 male ; assistants, 49 female and 11 male ; pupil-teachers, 19 female and 3 male ; probationers, 7 female and 1 male.

There have been forty-two appointments made during the year, besides those of a temporary nature and appointments of pupil-teachers. Eleven teachers from other districts received appointments, and twenty-four teachers in the service of the Board received promotion.

A new residence was erected at Huiakama, and the Huiroa School was enlarged. Applications were forwarded for a new residence at Tarata, new schools at Newall and York, and for the enlargement of the Awatuna, Hillsborough, Kaimiro, Waitara, and West End Schools, and rebuilding of the Frankley School.

The receipts of the Board from all sources, including the balance brought forward from last year, amounted to £31,914 13s. 11d., whilst the expenditure was as follows : Administration, £3,353 12s. 4d. ; teachers' salaries and allowances, £21,713 9s. 1d. ; secondary education, £1,137 14s. ; manual and technical, £1,341 11s. 1d. ; buildings, £4,801 16s. 10d. ; leaving a debit balance of £433 9s. 5d.

In the majority of our schools physical exercises are taken daily, with a more extended period for instruction once a week. In the larger schools cadet corps have been established, and these are formed into two battalions—No. 1 comprising the schools in the northern part of the district, and No. 2 those in the southern.

The Board was greatly inconvenienced in not receiving the usual advances on the maintenance grant during the year, and on the receipt of the Department's notification of the 24th December, 1909, that only the sum of £1,341 had been allotted to this district, was dismayed at the outlook, having spent over £2,400 on the upkeep of buildings during the year.

Saturday classes for the training of teachers were held during the year at Stratford and New Plymouth, and among the subjects studied were drawing, cookery, physiology and first aid, nature-study, cardboard work, singing, botany, and dairying.

The Board fully recognizes the benefit to be derived by pupils of the higher standards taking a course in dairying, and would like to see a greater number of teachers in attendance at the Saturday classes in this subject.

Classes for instruction in elementary handwork were conducted at forty-seven schools, and sewing under the Manual Regulations at nine. In addition, instruction in agriculture, physiology and first aid, physical measurements, advanced needlework, swimming, chemistry, botany, cookery, woodwork, dress-making, and dairying was recognized in 102 cases.

Mention might be made of the special rural classes established in connection with the District High School, Stratford. These classes promise to be a great success, the course covered embracing English, arithmetic, chemistry, botany, elementary surveying, dressmaking, woodwork, cookery, agriculture, physical measurements, and dairying.

Technical and continuation classes were again conducted at Stratford and New Plymouth, and met with a fair amount of support. The subjects studied were much the same as in previous years, and satisfactory interest was evinced on the part of the students.

The relations of the Board with the Education Department, its official and teaching staff, and with the School Committees, have been most cordial and pleasant throughout the year.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

JAMES WADE, Chairman.