

HAWKE'S BAY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Napier, 31st March, 1910.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, 1908, I beg to submit the following report of the proceedings of the Education Board of the District of Hawke's Bay for the year 1909 :—

BOARD.—At the beginning of the year the members in office were : North Ward—Messrs. W. Morgan, G. E. Darton, and S. McLernon ; Middle Ward—Sir William Russell, Messrs. C. M. Whittington, and T. Tanner ; South Ward—Mr. O. Ericksen, Pastor H. M. Ries, and Rev. A. Grant. Pastor Ries and Messrs. T. Tanner and C. M. Whittington retired in August ; the first two did not offer themselves for re-election. Mr. C. M. Whittington was re-elected unopposed to represent the Middle Ward, and Messrs. G. W. Hunter and M. McLeod were elected for the South and North Wards respectively. Sir William Russell was re-elected Chairman of the Board. Pastor Ries and Mr. W. Armstrong represented the Board on the Dannevirke High School Board of Governors, Messrs. T. Tanner and S. McLernon on the Napier High School Board, Messrs. C. M. Whittington and S. McLernon on the Hawke's Bay School Commissioners, and Messrs. S. McLernon and H. Hill on the Board of Managers of the Napier Technical School.

SCHOOLS.—The number of schools in operation at the end of 1909 was 107. During the year seventeen schools were opened and three were closed, leaving 122 (including two half-time and ten household schools) at the end of the year.

TEACHERS.—The teachers employed in December, 1909, numbered 302. Of these, sixty were pupil-teachers and nine probationers. Of the 233 adult teachers, sixty-four were uncertificated. The training colleges are beginning to have their effect, and it is expected that during the next year the proportion of uncertificated teachers will be still further materially decreased.

ATTENDANCE.—At the end of the year there were 10,138 scholars on the rolls of the public schools, an increase of 295 during the year. The increase in the average attendance was 456. The percentage of attendance was 88.4, an increase of 1.6 on the previous year, and a record for the district. During the year about 150 informations were laid against parents of irregular attenders. In nearly all cases convictions were recorded and fines inflicted.

INSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS.—Teachers' Saturday training classes were held as follows : Gisborne—cooking, dressmaking, and agriculture ; Napier—drawing, agriculture, physiology, and mathematics ; Dannevirke—drawing. The attendance at the classes was on the whole satisfactory, and good work was done. Special mention should be made of the work done by the teachers who attend the agriculture classes, which were under the direction of Mr. E. G. Loten. The attendance at these classes was excellent, and far-reaching results are confidently expected as a result of the work accomplished.

PHYSICAL AND MILITARY INSTRUCTION.—The Inspectors report that due attention has been given to the requirements of the Act regarding physical and military drill. Military drill is taught in all the larger schools, and the number of cadet corps has steadily increased. In practically all the schools breathing and physical exercises are practised daily.

MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.—During 1909 the number of schools in which special classes were held for instruction in manual and technical subjects was as follows : Handwork, 44 ; agriculture, 27 ; swimming and first aid, 9. In July the Board appointed Mr. E. G. Loten, of the staff of the Sydney Training School, and formerly of the Hawkesbury Agricultural College, to undertake the instruction in agriculture throughout the district. Mr. Loten has been successful in arousing among the teachers enthusiasm in the work, and as a result of his labours it is anticipated that agriculture will be included in the curriculum of three-fourths of the Board's schools next year. Arrangements are being made to form experimental stations at Gisborne, Napier, Hastings, Waipawa, and Dannevirke, and a laboratory is being specially fitted up at Hastings for the study of agricultural science.

At the beginning of the year the management of the Napier Technical Day and Evening School was handed over to the Napier Technical Classes Association. The school has had a successful year, although it suffered a severe blow in the death of its Director, Mr. R. P. Clarkson. The day school is undoubtedly filling a long-felt want in the district, and with the erection and equipment of an engineering-shop the school should become a most useful institution.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The scholarships in tenure at the end of 1909 were : Junior National, 10 ; Junior Board, 52 ; Senior Board, 10 : total, 72.

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—Three district high schools were in operation at the end of the year. The roll-numbers of the secondary classes were : Hastings, 39 ; Waipawa, 26 ; Woodville, 23 : total, 88.

NEW BUILDINGS.—New schools were erected at Mangatahi, Puha, Rangitane, Raumati, and Te Puia ; new residences at Argyll, Te Arai, Pakowhai, Mangatoro, Ngamoko, Mohaka, and Pakipaki. During the year the school at Wairoa and the residence at Porangahau were destroyed by fire. A new school is now in course of erection on a larger and more conveniently situated site at Wairoa.

MAINTENANCE AND REPLACEMENT OF BUILDINGS, FURNITURE, AND APPARATUS.—The Board now employs a foreman of works, who undertakes most of the large repairs and small additions necessary. He also supervises the erection of the whole of the new buildings. The Board has already found that it is getting better work at less cost than formerly. During the year eighteen schools and eleven residences were painted and thoroughly renovated inside and out by the Board's workmen. The schools and residences in the district are, with a few exceptions, in good order. Nearly £400 has been expended in replacing old and out-of-date apparatus, and a number of schools have been partially refurnished with single desks. A further supply of apparatus is on order, and it is intended to supply single desks for the upper standards of some of the larger schools this year.

FINANCE. The total receipts were £59,071 3s. 10d., made up as follows : Balance, December, 1908, £6,186 15s. 3d. ; teachers' salaries, £34,462 9s. ; administration, &c., £6,347 18s. 1d. ; secondary education, £2,098 11s. 6d. ; manual and technical, £3,034 15s. 4d. ; buildings, £6,940 14s. 8d. The expenditure was £56,333 10s. 6d.—viz., teachers' salaries, £35,125 14s. 5d. ; administration, &c., £6,374 7s. 9d. ; secondary education, £2,411 8s. 4d. ; manual and technical, £2,480 2s. 6d. ; buildings, £9,941 17s. 6d. ; leaving a credit balance in December, 1909, of £2,737 13s. 4d.

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The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

W. R. RUSSELL, Chairman,