

At the end of 1912, school was held in 453 buildings belonging to the Board, and in 145 privately owned buildings.

The number of teachers' residences was 199. In several districts in the Waitomo and Ohura Counties shelter-shed schools have been built at a cost of from £80 to £100 each, in districts which are too inaccessible to admit of the timber for a standard school being conveyed into them, or in cases where the number of children is too small to warrant the Board in applying for a grant for a standard school.

The improvement, renovation, and larger repairs of schools continues to be undertaken by a competent staff of workmen, under the direction of the architect. It is found that this is the most economical and satisfactory method of carrying out the works.

Grading and Appointment of Teachers.—During the year the Board of Inspectors regraded the teachers. Marks were allotted under various heads, as follows: Scholastic attainments, 30 marks (*i.e.*, Class E, 8 marks; Class D, 16; Class C, 22; Class B, 26; Class A, 30); for service, 20 marks (*i.e.*, one mark for every full year of service in the public schools of New Zealand, and one mark for every two years of service in the public or State schools of other English-speaking countries); for teaching-efficiency, 90 marks; for discipline and personality, 50 marks; and for attention to environment, 10 marks: total, 200 marks.

Teachers have been supplied with the marks awarded to them under the various heads; but they have not been informed of the numerical position which their names occupy on the graded list.

Experience has demonstrated that, though the grading has given general satisfaction, improvements can be effected in it. This matter is now under the consideration of the Board. It is intended to regrade the teachers under an amended scheme during the present year.

The method adopted by the Board in making permanent appointments is to advertise the position and to submit to the School Committee concerned one name only—the name of the teacher whose name stands the highest of the applicants on the graded list of teachers. This ensures the best applicant obtaining the appointment, and removes from the Board and from School Committees all powers of patronage.

Manual and Technical Instruction.—Towards the end of the year a portion of the new Seddon Memorial Technical College, which had been in the course of erection since May, 1909, was occupied for classes, the number of individual students in attendance at classes in Auckland for 1912 being 1,519. The College is now fully occupied, but a considerable sum of money would be required to provide adequate equipment, whilst the additional two stories to complete the building are urgently required.

Manual-training and technical schools were opened during the year at Devonport, Helensville, Waihi, and Pukekohe. Local contributions were also made during the year towards the cost of the erection of manual-training schools at Te Kopuru, Dargaville, Waipu, Maungaturoto, Paparoa, and Te Aroha; and it is hoped the Department will find the necessary balance to allow these schools to be erected as soon as possible.

The number of schools in which elementary agriculture was taught during the year was 167, as compared with 140 of the previous year. Handwork was taught in 230 schools, being an increase of thirty-three over 1911. In fourteen schools instruction in swimming and life-saving was given during the year, and in schools below Grade IV taught by a male teacher seventy-two were recognized for sewing.

Inspectors.—Mr. James Grierson, Senior Inspector, retired on account of ill health at the end of last year. The Board records its appreciation of the faithful services rendered by Mr. Grierson as an Inspector of Schools. Mr. Norman R. McKenzie was appointed an Inspector of Schools from the beginning of February.

Physical and Military Drill.—The requirements of the Act in the matter of the instruction of pupils in physical and military drill have been duly complied with.

Relieving-teachers.—The grant for relieving-teachers has proved to be insufficient. During last year the receipts amounted to £951 18s. 1d., whereas the payments were £1,285 9s., showing a loss of £333 10s. 11d. during the year. The debit balance on account of relieving-teachers at the end of last year was £2,081 8s. 2d.

Medical Inspection.—The Medical Inspector has visited most of the schools in the City of Auckland and suburbs. He has also visited the principal schools in the Whangarei, Hamilton, Thames, and Waihi districts.

The thanks of the Board are due to the Education Department for the careful consideration of its recommendations; and to the School Committees of the district for their cordial co-operation during the year.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE J. GARLAND, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

TARANAKI.

SIR,—

Education Office, New Plymouth, 18th March, 1913.

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 1912:—

At the beginning of the year the Board was comprised of the following members: Mr. Harold Trimble (Chairman), Messrs. G. A. Adlam, A. H. Halcombe, W. L. Kennedy, Arthur Morton, John McArthur, William Rogers, and James Young. At a special election held on the 2nd January to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. Cargill's resignation, Mr. Robert Masters was elected a member for the East Ward; and at a special election held on the 3rd June to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of