

dressmaking were inaugurated. The attendance here was not so encouraging, the dressmaking classes being terminated at the end of the first term.

Further and full information regarding the work done in the district under the Manual and Technical Instruction Act will be found in the Director's annual report,* which is attached hereto.

Physical Instruction.—During the year the work done in military drill, physical and breathing exercises, showed considerable improvement. This was largely due to the improved instruction given by teachers who had attended the Saturday classes in physical culture and the Cadet officers' camp. Great service was rendered by Sergeant-major Just, of the Cadet Department, who visited many of the country and town schools, and gave valuable assistance in this branch of school-work.

Scholarships.—The scholarships in tenure at the end of 1912 were twelve Junior National, forty Junior Board, and fifteen Senior Board. The Board regrets that it was unable to obtain the Department's approval of the regulations *re* the proposed agricultural scholarships; but it is hoped that the obstacles will shortly be overcome, and the scholarships be open for competition in 1913.

Buildings.—During the year new schools were erected at Makaretu South, Omakere, Marakeke, Maraetotara, and Twyford, and the hall at Kaitaratahi was converted into a school. Additions were made to the schools at Te Hapara, Havelock, Mahora, Mangapapa, Mangateretere, and Waipukurau; those at Te Arai, Waipiro Bay, and Mangapapa are incomplete. A teacher's residence was erected at Wanstead, and others are in course of erection at Ruahine, Opoutama, Te Rehunga, and Kaitaratahi. The whole of the school buildings at Woodville, Kumeroa, Hopelands, Paptawa, Tipapakuku, Waipukurau, Ruataniwha, Ongaonga, Ruahine, Blackburn, Wakarara, Argyll, Wallingford, Hatuma North, and Hatuma South have been renovated inside and out. The oldest of the school furniture is gradually being replaced by dual desks. This replacement will be more vigorously continued as soon as the Board's workshop is completed—probably in April next.

Finance.—The year began with a credit balance of £6,986 13s. 2d. The receipts were £66,615 13s. 6d., the disbursements £68,017 7s. 11d., leaving a credit balance of £5,524 18s. 9d.

I have, &c.,

C. E. WHITTINGTON, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

MARLBOROUGH.

SIR,—

Education Office, Blenheim, 25th February, 1913.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, the Marlborough Education Board has the honour to present the following report of the proceedings for the year ended 31st December, 1912:—

Board.—At the beginning of the year the Board was constituted as follows: Eastern Ward, Mr. John Conolly, Mr. D'Arcy Chaytor, and Mr. Chas. Ferguson; Central Ward, Mr. R. McCallum, M.P., Mr. E. H. Penny, and Mr. J. J. W. White; Western Ward, Mr. H. M. Reader, Mr. John S. Storey, and Mr. James Fulton. The members who retired in accordance with section 11 of the Education Act were Messrs. Chaytor, White, and Reader. Mr. White was returned unopposed. The contested elections in the Eastern and Western Wards respectively resulted in the return of Mr. Robert A. Storey and Mr. Chas. Nees. Mr. Chaytor did not offer himself for re-election. Mr. Robert A. Storey subsequently resigned, and his place was filled by the election of Mr. Alex. Mackay. At the annual meeting Mr. McCallum was unanimously reappointed Chairman. Twelve ordinary meetings of the Board were held during the year [details not printed.]

Schools.—The number of schools open at the close of the year was ninety-six, being an increase of three on the figures of the previous year. Four private schools were visited by the Board's Inspector.

Attendance.—The average attendance for the year was 2,117, the figures for the four quarters being—March, 2,120; June, 2,072; September, 2,126; December, 2,149. The number on the roll at the close of the year was 2,401, being an increase of fifty-six on the figures for 1911. The percentage of attendance for the year was 89.59, being 2.01 per cent. lower than in 1911. Epidemics were prevalent during several months of 1912, and this seriously affected the attendance at many of the larger schools. The number of children attending the four private schools inspected was 190. The Truant Officers in their reports to the Board show that fourteen informations were laid against parents for failing to comply with the requirements of the School Attendance Act. The convictions numbered ten, the remaining cases being withdrawn. The total amount of fines received by the Board during the year was £4 10s.

Teachers.—At the close of the year there were in the service of the Board thirty male teachers, ninety female teachers, three female pupil-teachers, and four female probationers, making a total of 127. Of the 120 teachers, forty are certificated, and two others hold licenses to teach.

Instruction of Teachers.—The courses of instruction held during the year were as follows: Cookery, by Miss M. Grace; dairy-work, by Mr. James Bruce and Mr. L. J. Wild; hygiene, by Dr. Adams; singing, by Mr. A. A. Wedde. With the aid of the Department's special grant for the purpose, the Board inaugurated training classes in Blenheim for its uncertificated teachers, under the direction of Mr. A. A. Wedde. Those who, by reason of distance, are unable to come to Blenheim receive instruction by correspondence. The scheme was welcomed by the teachers, and the results so far obtained are highly satisfactory.

* See E.—5, Report on Manual and Technical Training.