

The following is an abstract* showing the number of schools, teachers, and pupils attending schools in the district, beginning with the year 1878, to the present time.

Year ending	Schools.	Head Teachers.	Assistants.	Pupil-teachers and Probationers.	Total.	Roll Number.	Average.
1878	25	23	1	12	36	1,016	753
1883	37	36	10	14	61	2,060	1,306
1888	37	37	11	24	72	2,415	1,847
1893	49	49	11	29	89	3,358	2,471
1898	63	63	17	33	113	3,981	3,192
1903	72	70	45	19	134	4,754	3,971
1908	88	85	48	19	152	5,370	4,653
1912	94	93	71	29	193	6,139	5,381
1913	97	96	81	28	205	6,198	5,496

* Condensed into five-yearly periods from 1878 to 1908.

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.

HAROLD TRIMBLE, Chairman.

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Education Office, Wanganui, 31st March, 1914.

I have the honour to submit a report of the proceedings of this Board for the year 1913.

Board.—At the end of the year the Board consisted of Messrs. Fred. Pirani (Chairman), A. Fraser, G. H. Bennett (Southern Ward), D. H. Guthrie, M.P., F. Purnell, and T. A. Harris (Central Ward), and F. M. Spurdle, P. O'Dea, and E. Dixon (Northern Ward). Mr. J. P. Aldridge, who was a member of the Central Ward, retired, Mr. T. A. Harris being elected in his stead. The members whose term of office expired under the provisions of the Act were Messrs. P. O'Dea, D. H. Guthrie, and A. Fraser. Mr. J. W. M. Luxford, of Wanganui, unsuccessfully opposed Mr. O'Dea. Messrs. D. H. Guthrie and A. Fraser were re-elected unopposed. Mr. Pirani was elected Chairman for the eighth successive term. Twelve meetings were held, the average attendance of members being eight.

Schools.—New schools were opened at Moturoa (Grade 0), Bainesse and Ruatiti (Grade I), Kakatihi and Whaka Road (Grade II), and West End, Palmerston North (Grade VIIA). The side school at Marton Junction was attached to Crofton from the beginning of the third quarter. The schools at Te Awa and Riverton were closed. There were open at the end of the year 207 main and three side schools.

Private Schools.—During the year the Board's Inspectors visited twenty private schools, the number of pupils present on the occasion of the visits being 1,250.

Attendance.—The roll number on the 31st December was 15,614, which shows an increase of 511 on the figures for the previous year. The average attendance for the last quarter was 13,932, and for the year 13,904, the latter being 582 in advance of 1912. The average weekly roll number was 15,555. The average attendance expressed as a percentage of this is 89·3, which is 0·8 above the previous year—a very satisfactory improvement. The Truant Officer is entitled to credit for his successful endeavours to improve the attendance in the district. The following figures in connexion with his year's work are interesting: Visits to schools, 260; miles travelled, 8,600; summonses issued, 220; convictions recorded, 184; summonses withdrawn or dismissed, 25; cases adjourned, 11. The amount of fines inflicted was £39 19s., and special expenses allowed £5 5s.

Allowances for Conveyance and Board of Children.—There are eight schools where the system of conveying children is working satisfactorily. In all cases of applications for the establishment of new schools the feasibility of conveying children to the nearest schools is carefully considered. In the backblock districts the roads are almost impassable for wheel traffic in the winter months—in some cases there are no roads at all—and in such places the Board has no alternative but to establish schools, although it realizes that the opening of small schools within a radius of a few miles is a course to be avoided if at all possible. The fact is impressed upon settlers that it is to the children's advantage to attend central schools, even if by doing so they are put to some inconvenience, because, as a general rule, small schools situated away from the railway-line are in charge of teachers with little or no experience. Great difficulty is experienced in filling such positions. The allowance of 2s. 6d. per week which is paid to children compelled to live away from home in order to attend school was, at the end of the year, being paid on account of six children.

Teachers.—Excluding pupil-teachers, probationers, and relieving teachers, there were 403 teachers in the Board's service on the 31st December, of whom 181 were males and 222 were females. The number holding teachers' certificates was 260. The number of uncertificated teachers was therefore 143, or 35·5 per cent. of the total, against 45·6 per cent. for the year 1912. Of the uncertificated teachers, twelve were in charge of schools of Grade 0, thirty-one were in charge of