

Education Act, 1914.—In relation to the Education Act, 1914, this Board held the opinion, and events and a closer acquaintance with the Act have served rather to confirm than change it, that the wisest course last session would have been to deal with teachers' salaries as a matter urgent, and to afford Boards, teachers, and the community at large an opportunity of studying in earnest the proposals embodied in the Bill for a complete recasting of education law and administration. *Festina lente* was, as this Board believed and believes, a motto proper for the needs of the occasion, and its adoption would have enabled mistakes to be avoided and educational stability to be more quickly reached than by the method of hasty legislation adopted. That view was, however, not affirmed by the Education Committee, or by Parliament. Having said this, the Wellington Education Board wishes to add that, as it exists solely to promote the welfare of education in this district, it will by earnest and loyal endeavour do its very utmost to achieve the best results under the conditions prescribed by recent legislation, in relation to which one further remark may possibly repay study—there is a limit to the utility and efficacy of regulations.

The Board's Inspectors.—One change made by the Act the Board most sincerely and most specially regrets—namely, the transfer of its inspectorate to the Civil Service. In ending the old order and entering on the new, my Board wishes to place on record its high appreciation of the services the Inspectors have rendered. The success of the organizing work of the recent years of continuous development and the fine friendly spirit of work which exists are specially creditable to the Board's Chief Inspector, Mr. Fleming, and to Inspector Bakewell, who have given respectively twenty-four and sixteen years of sterling inspectorial service to the district. The Board affirms, without reservation, that its Inspectors have discharged with discretion, zeal, and honour the duties, always responsible, frequently laborious, occasionally disagreeable, which have devolved upon them, so that they have well earned the complete confidence of the Board, of the teaching profession, of School Committees, and of the community generally. The high standard of education attained here is at once a tribute to the efforts of the Board's Inspectors, to the zealous response of its teachers, and to the worth of the relationship between Board and Inspectors, which has just been terminated. The weaknesses in relation to the inspectorate, promotion and payment of teachers, and the like, which Parliament desired to remedy, were not necessarily inherent in the Board system, but were largely the outcome of the original legislative blunder of creating a number of districts so small, and so sparsely peopled that a stable finance, a strong inspectorate, and a reasonable field for promotion could not be provided under the financial and legislative conditions then prescribed.

Thanks.—The Board desires to acknowledge the courtesy which you and the officers of your Department have accorded to its various communications. They are especially pleased with the evident appreciation of the difficulties of this district in relation to sites, as evidenced in the proposal regarding the disposal of the Terrace Gaol site.

This report would be incomplete without an acknowledgment of the Board's sense of the value of the services rendered by its School Committees, many of whom have done admirable work; and of the fidelity of the great body of its teachers to the weighty responsibilities devolving on them. Special mention should be made of the Wellington City Council, which has supplied seven of our city schools with library books; of the continued support of the trusts—Masterton and Greytown—various agricultural societies, and the assistance of Mr. Cockayne, of the Agricultural Department, who has not only placed on many occasions at our disposal his skill and experience for the advancement of agricultural education, but has also donated a valuable prize.

Finance.—The balance on current account at the 1st January was £474 14s. 10d. The receipts total £135,086 7s. 7d., disbursements total £137,249 16s. 5d. Balance on current account at the 31st December, *Dr.* £1,688 14s. The sum of £4,000 is on deposit for rebuilding.

The War.—The outbreak of war, that all engrossing theme of the world's thought, had its immediate effect on our schools. Inspector Charters, nineteen teachers, and eight students joined the Expeditionary Forces; every male student in the Training College rendered some form of military service, either at home or abroad. The enthusiastic effort of School Committees, teachers, and children was aroused by the field-ambulance proposal. Local schemes, mostly for Belgian relief, had already been planned, and in several instances for these individual schools raised over £100. Nevertheless, the ambulance fund benefited to an amount of over £233. As indirect results of the war, the Board hopes that new life may be imparted to the teaching especially of geography and history; that the latter may attain the place in the Dominion scheme of education which its worth demands; and, finally, that as our children see an army of free men grow into being under their very eyes, patriotism and freedom may for them attain to new meanings undreamt of before, and their hearts may vibrate in deep, strong, and pure responsive reply to the call of home and country. The Board desires to place on record here the names of those who were accepted for military service abroad [names not printed.]

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

J. G. W. AITKEN, Chairman.

HAWKE'S BAY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Napier, 1st April, 1915.

In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, the Education Board of the District of Hawke's Bay has the honour to submit the following report of its proceedings during the year 1914.

Board.—The personnel of the Board has undergone considerable change during the year. Mr. R. B. Ross declined re-election to represent the South Ward, and Mr. P. G. Grant was elected unop-