

The office-work has been carried on under very difficult conditions, owing to the enlistment of several of the staff, other changes, and illness, but the good record of the past has been more than maintained, and it seems a pity that, instead of the district being extended and the scope of work widened, the reverse has been the result of the decision of the Council of Education in regard to the boundaries. The thanks of the Board are due to the Secretary, Mr. W. H. Swanger, who has fully met the great demand upon his time and abilities, and his capable assistants.

The work of the teachers has been generally good, and I only regret that the action of the Council of Education will result in my severing my connection with the Board after twenty years' service as a member.

I have, &c.,

FRED PIRANI, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Wellington, 31st March, 1916.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, 1914, I beg to submit the following report of the Education Board of the District of Wellington for the year 1915.

Board.—At the annual election Messrs. W. Allen (city), J. Kebbell (Hutt-Horowhenua), and Sir W. C. Buchanan, M.L.C. (Wairarapa), were re-elected. The Hon. Mr. Aitken, M.L.C., was elected chairman at the annual meeting in August. The following was the membership of the Board at the end of the year: Wellington City Ward—The Hon. J. G. W. Aitken, M.L.C., Messrs. W. Allen and C. M. Luke; Hutt-Horowhenua Ward—Messrs. H. Freeman, W. H. Field, M.P., and J. Kebbell; Wairarapa Ward—Sir Walter Buchanan, M.L.C., Messrs. A. W. Hogg, and T. Moss. The Board's representative Managers of Technical Schools were: Wellington—The Hon. J. G. W. Aitken, M.L.C., Messrs. Allan, Field, M.P., C. M. Luke, and G. L. Stewart. Petone—Messrs. J. W. McEwan and D. McKenzie. Masterton—Mr. A. W. Hogg. The membership of the Committee of Advice of the Training College, which remained unchanged, was: Wellington—The Hon. Mr. Aitken, M.L.C. (Chairman), Senior Inspector Fleming; Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, and Wanganui—The Hon. G. Carson, M.L.C.; Nelson, Marlborough, Grey, and Westland—Mr. W. Lock; Professorial Board, Victoria College—Professor Brown.

Number of Schools.—At the end of 1914 there were 167 schools in operation. During 1915 new schools were opened at Waihoki Valley, Poroporo, Ruawhata, Eastern Hutt, Berhampore, and Mangapakeha. Schools were closed at Mikimiki Valley, Waimanu, Wangaeahu, Pori, Kaiwaka, and Aohanga. Thus at the end of the year there were 167 schools in operation.

Attendance.—The average roll and attendance for the respective quarters and the year were:—

						Average Roll.	Average Attendance.
March quarter	..	..	..	..	..	19,768	18,162
June quarter	..	..	..	..	..	19,922	18,350
September quarter	..	..	..	..	..	20,200	18,178
December quarter	..	..	..	..	..	20,496	18,502
Year	..	..	..	..	..	20,097	18,298

The Board again reports a very satisfactory regularity of attendance. The average attendance, 91 per cent. of the average roll, and the numerical increase of 920 in roll and of 860 in attendance, are records for the district. The corresponding percentages for the years 1914, 1913, 1912, and 1911 were 90.9, 90.3, 90, and 90.1 per cent. It was, unfortunately, necessary to institute proceedings in a number of cases of culpable negligence. There is more than an impression, also, that in such work as the delivery of newspapers and milk in towns, and also on the farm in some dairying districts, too much in morning and evening labour is required of young children, with resulting unpunctuality and lack of mental alertness. Committees can do much, by sound personal influence, to discountenance unreasonable demands on young children.

Teaching Staff.—The following are the numbers of teachers, pupil-teachers, and probationers who were in the Board's service at the end of the year:—

					Men.	Women.	Totals.
Heads of schools	..	..	..	..	67	12	79
Sole teachers	..	..	..	..	22	65	87
Assistants	..	..	..	..	61	263	324
Total adults	..	..	..	..	150	340	490
Pupil-teachers	..	..	..	..	8	44	52
					158	384	542
Probationers	..	..	..	..	5	36	41
Total, including pupil-teachers and probationers..					163	420	583

Of the adult teachers, 140 men, 281 women, total 421, possessed certificates; sixty-nine were uncertificated, of whom six were holders of a license to teach. The percentage of fully certificated-teachers was 85.9, the same as in 1914. Of the uncertificated teachers many were partially qualified for the certificate, some being merely under age.