

Buildings.—During the year a new school was erected at Sherenden; additions were made to the schools at Makauri, Ngatapa, Patutahi, Tokomaru Bay, and Napier West; a residence was erected at Matawai, and the temporary school at Otoko was removed to a permanent site. The residences at Mangatoro and Waerenga-a-hika were destroyed by fire. The following buildings were painted and thoroughly renovated inside and out by the Board's workmen: Schools—Taradale, Patutahi, Ormond, Kanakanaia, Te Karaka, Motu, Whatatutu, Rakauaroa, Whakarau, Puhu, Kaitaratahi, Waerenga-a-hika, Makaraka, Tologa Bay, and Kaiti; residences—Taradale, Patutahi, Ormond, Te Karaka, Motu, Kaitaratahi, Waerenga-a-hika, Makauri, and Tologa Bay. Old furniture continues to be replaced by single and dual desks. During the year 591 dual and 324 single desks were despatched from the Board's workshop.

Finance.—The cash balance on the 31st December, 1914, was £3,142 Os. 9d. During the year the receipts have totalled £84,946 2s. 11d., the disbursements £81,509 9s. 3d., leaving a credit balance of £6,582 14s. 5d.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

I have, &c.,

J. H. SHEATH, Chairman.

MARLBOROUGH.

SIR,—

Education Office, Blenheim, 10th April, 1916.

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 ending 31st December, 1915:—

Board.—At the beginning of the year the Board was constituted as follows: Eastern Ward—Mr. John Conolly, Mr. Alex. Mackay, and Mr. Charles Ferguson; Central Ward—Mr. J. J. W. White, Mr. R. McCallum, M.P., and Mr. E. H. Penny; Western Ward—Mr. Charles Nees, Mr. John S. Storey, and Mr. James Fulton. The members who retired in accordance with section 16 of the Education Act were Messrs. Mackay, White, and Nees, but all were returned unopposed. At the annual meeting Mr. White was elected Chairman. Twelve ordinary and three special meetings of the Board were held during the year, the attendance of members being—Mr. Conolly, 12; Mr. Mackay, 14; Mr. Ferguson, 12; Mr. McCallum, 11; Mr. Penny, 15; Mr. White, 14; Mr. Storey, 12; Mr. Fulton, 12; Mr. Nees, 14. It is with great regret that we have to record the death in January last of Mr. John Conolly, who for nine and a half years was a most valued member of the Board. Mr. Conolly took the keenest interest in educational matters, and the welfare of the school-children was always his first consideration. He was possessed of a most kindly disposition, and his sound advice and wise counsel are a keen loss to the Board.

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

Attendance.—The average attendance for the year was 2,337, the figures for the four quarters being—March, 2,275; June, 2,323; September, 2,357; December, 2,393. The number on the roll at the close of the year was 2,595, being an increase of seventy-eight on the figures for 1914. The percentage of attendance for the year was 91.44, being 0.14 per cent. lower than in 1914. Except in the case of a few schools, the district was free from serious epidemics. The number of children attending the private schools inspected was 237. The Truant Officer's report to the Board shows that twelve informations were laid against parents for failing to comply with the School Attendance Act, and convictions were recorded in each case.

Teachers.—At the close of the year there were in the service of the Board twenty-five male teachers, 103 female teachers, one male and three female pupil-teachers, and seven female probationers, making a total of 139. Of the 128 adult teachers forty-six are certificated, and one holds a license to teach.

Instruction of Teachers.—The courses of instruction held during the year were as follows: Dairy-work, by Mr. G. G. Hancox, M.A.; hygiene (first aid), by Dr. R. Noble Adams; vocal music, by Mr. G. H. Gray and Mr. A. A. Wedde; drawing, by Mr. H. Robson, M.A.; sewing by Miss J. Brown. The correspondence course for uncertificated teachers, under the direction of Mr. A. A. Wedde, continues to do good work. It has been decided to make it compulsory for all uncertificated teachers in the Board's service to do the work set by the instructor.

Physical Instruction.—[See report of Inspector of Schools in Appendix B.]

Scholarships.—The scholarships in force at the close of the year were—Board, 7; Junior National, 4. None of the local candidates qualified for a scholarship at the examination held in December last.

Manual and Technical. School classes in woodwork, cookery, and advanced plain needlework were continued at the Blenheim Technical School, being attended by pupils from the following schools: Blenheim, Picton, Grovetown, Marlboroughtown, Tuamarina, Koromiko, and Convent. All of the schools in the district included some branch of handwork in their schemes of work, and a larger number than usual qualified for capitation. At eight schools a full course in elementary agriculture was given, and swimming and life-saving were systematically taught at three schools.

Buildings.—The expenditure under this head during 1915 was £3,280 7s. 7d., comprising £645 1s. 3d. for new works, £367 6s. 3d. for rebuilding, £2,264 0s. 1d. for maintenance, and £4 for rents. During the year new schools were completed at Hillersden and Dillon's Point; the Mirza School was removed to Mills; the Fairhall School and one class-room of the Grovetown School were rebuilt; and