

Buildings and Sites.—New schools were erected at Beaconsfield, to replace that destroyed by fire in 1918, and Tunakotekote. A temporary building was erected at Koeke for use pending settlement of the question of site. The Mount Curl building was removed and utilized in the remodelling of the Western Rangitikei School. Two rooms of the old school at Aramoho were moved to the new site. The site and building erected by the settlers at Upper Rataruke were conveyed to the Board. New latrine buildings in brick were provided at College Street. Additions were made to the schools at Turangarere, Kimbolton, and Gonville. The rebuilding of the Foxton and Queen's Park schools in brick was commenced. A contract was let towards the end of the year for a brick building for the infant department of the Campbell Street School. Works in prospect include new schools at Kakariki, Moawhango, Maungaroa Road, Bainesse, Campbell Street Main, College Street (infant department), and additions at Rangiotu, Lytton Street, and Wanganui East. Repairs were effected to forty-five schools, and twenty-six primary schools, one technical school, and thirteen residences were repainted. Sites were obtained for new schools at Coal Creek and Bainesse. Additional land was purchased for the College Street School, and negotiations are proceeding for the acquisition of a new site at Bluff Road and for additional land for Terrace End, Campbell Street, and Taonui Schools. No great difficulty was experienced in securing adequate supplies of building-materials, but the shortage of labour hampered building operations considerably during the year.

Medical Inspection.—An experimental health camp under the supervision of the Medical Inspector of Schools was held at Turakina for two weeks in November last. Fifty-five children suffering from malnutrition, who had been selected during the medical inspection, were taken into camp. The results were very satisfactory indeed, there being no case in which improvement was not shown. Toothbrush drill has been introduced into a number of the schools. The importance of this matter is recognized and special attention is being paid to it this year. The system of organized lunches, which has been in vogue in some of our schools for a number of years, will be considerably extended during the current year, and it is hoped that before long it will be included in the organization scheme of every school in the district.

Organizing Teachers.—Under the regulations gazetted during the year four organizing teachers were appointed in October. Although the system was in operation for only a short time, the reports indicate marked improvement in the work of the schools visited, being a repetition of the results obtained under the system carried out under the Board some years ago, but discontinued when the Inspectors were taken over by the Department.

Manual and Technical Instruction.—The increased capitation for manual and technical classes enabled the Board to grant increases in the salaries of instructors, some of which were long overdue. At Feilding the purchase of an additional 10 acres for the proposed Technical High School was completed, without cost to the State. Plans are now being prepared for the building and also for a hostel. The matter of a site for a boys' hostel at Wanganui is still unsettled. It is hoped that a suitable site will soon be secured in order that the building may be proceeded with, as the present temporary arrangements for the accommodation of the boys are inadequate. Extensive additions are required at the Wanganui Technical College. The erection of a building at Marton for classes in plumbing, &c., is contemplated.

Finance.—After taking assets and liabilities into account the net credit balance at the end of the year was £8,126 16s. 10d. The balance in the General Account was £1,502 10s. 9d., Maintenance and Rebuilding Accounts £4,623 17s. 9d., and the Manual and Technical Accounts £1,843 19s. 11d. The Rees Bequest and Alexander Bequest Trust Accounts were in credit £1,086 15s. 11d. and £2,506 7s. 8d. respectively.

General.—The work of teachers has been carried out under considerable difficulty, mainly due to the crowded schools and prevalence of epidemics, while the percentage of absence through illness has been very large. There has not been a complaint about any member of the profession during the year, while commendation for good work has been the rule rather than the exception. Our staff of itinerant instructors is an efficient one, and the work done in the vocational courses is beyond praise. Proposals have been agreed to which will make for greater efficiency in our agricultural work, and the employment of young teachers, whose technical training has been carried out under the Board, as assistant instructors under a good system is sure to be beneficial to the students and those engaged in the work. The wisdom of employing an efficient itinerant drawing instructor for the primary schools has been amply borne out by results, and this is very satisfactory to the Board, especially when the fact that the instructor is one of our own.

If not out of place I should like to make a plea for the better control of primary, secondary, and technical education, which can all be better managed by one authority, enabling correlation of the three divisions to be more complete, exchange of teachers and instructors more general, and immensely increasing the efficiency and economical administration of education from the primary school right up to the University. The tendency to gradually centralize the control in Wellington, which is such a marked feature of the Central Department of late years, if allowed to continue, will be the greatest blow to educational progress the system here has experienced.

I have, &c.,
FRED PIRANI, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Education Board Office, Wellington, 31st March, 1920.

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 1919 :—

Board.—The Board membership at the beginning of the year was :—Urban areas : (1) Wellington City and Boroughs of Karori, Onslow, and Miramar—Thomas Forsyth (Chairman), R. A. Wright, M.P., J. J. Clark, and J. P. Shand ; (2) Hutt and Petone—Messrs. G. T. London and E. P. Rishworth. Rural area : (1) Hutt—Horowhenua Ward—Messrs. W. H. Field, M.P., and C. I. Harkness ; (2) Wairarapa Ward—Messrs. A. W. Hogg and T. Moss ; (3) Marlborough Ward—Messrs. R. McCallum, M.P., and E. H. Penny. The Board's representative managers of technical schools were : Wellington—Messrs. T. Forsyth, J. J. Clark, J. P. Shand, A. G. Wallace, L. R. Partridge, G. L. Stewart ; Petone—Messrs. G. T. London, H. Baldwin, D. McKenzie, and W. B. Nicholson ; Masterton—Mr. A. W. Hogg.