

*Conveyance and Boarding Allowances.*—Conveyance allowance was paid for an average of 111 children in attendance at twenty-seven schools, and boarding-allowances for an average of twenty-seven children in attendance at eleven schools. The total expenditure was £643 10s. 11d.

*Voluntary Contributions.*—The total amount received during the year by way of voluntary contributions towards improvements to buildings and grounds, purchase of equipment, library books, &c., was £4,079 13s. 8d. In addition £208 16s. 6d. was received for manual and technical classes. I regret that the Government has included subsidies on voluntary contributions in its campaign of economy. I am of the opinion that where a community is prepared to help itself by raising funds, in many cases to meet the cost of carrying out works and providing equipment which should be borne by the public purse, the Government subsidy should be not less than £1 for £1.

*Health of Children.*—The School Medical Officer continues to do excellent work in this district, and it is largely due to her zeal and enthusiasm that tooth-brush drill is carried out daily in the majority of the schools. It is only necessary to compare the condition of the mouths of those children who do tooth-brush drill with the mouths of those who do not to be convinced of the value of tooth-brush drill as an aid to good health. Parents are invited to be present at the schools when their children are being examined by the Medical Officer, and many of them take advantage of this privilege to discuss the health of their children with the Medical Officer. The Board regrets that the Health Department has not yet seen fit to establish a school dental clinic in the room at Wanganui provided by the Board rent-free, and fitted up at the expense of the Health Department over a year ago. The Board was assured that if a room were provided a clinic would be established, but in spite of repeated applications for the fulfilment of the promise made the room is still vacant. Organized lunch is a feature in most of our schools.

*Physical Instruction and School Athletics.*—With the limited time at his disposal the Department's physical instructor has done good work. It is of course impossible for him to visit all schools in view of the large number of schools in the combined districts under his charge. I consider that each school should be visited at least once a year. Instead of increasing the number of instructors to enable this to be done, the Department has reduced the number for this coast to one, which is regretted. Athletic games in our schools have made great advances during the past few years. Public schools amateur athletic associations have been formed at Feilding, Palmerston North, Patea, Marton, and Wanganui, and at centres in the Main Trunk district. Sports meetings, and cricket, swimming, football, and hockey competitions are held annually. At the beginning of the current year the Wanganui Amateur Athletic Association organized a schools championship meeting, the idea being that the champions from the various centres should compete at Wanganui for the district championships. It is pleasing to note the enthusiasm shown by teachers and others in the effort to encourage amateur sport. The inspectors have given their support by requiring at least half an hour daily to be placed on the timetable for organized games under the direction of the teachers.

*Organizing Teachers.*—Excellent work continues to be done by organizing teachers. The staff at present consists of four, but the Department has decreed that the number be reduced to two. It seems useless to protest, but I can at least say that the feeling throughout the country districts is one of disappointment at the retrograde step. In a district such as ours it will always be necessary to employ a certain number of uncertificated and inexperienced teachers. The organizing teachers have proved of great assistance to teachers of this class. The fact should not be overlooked that such teachers in time qualify for better positions, and some of them leave the service. Their places are filled by other beginners needing assistance and advice, and so the demand for the services of the organizing teachers is continuous. The Training College will never be able to supply us with teachers for the backblocks schools. The conditions in many of these places are such that trained teachers will not accept appointments in these localities. We have therefore to appoint inexperienced teachers and train them so as to make them fairly efficient for the class of school they are required to teach.

*Model Country School.*—In May last a model country school was established in connection with Queen's Park School. The Board desires to congratulate the Department on its action in establishing schools of this class, which will serve a long-felt want in those districts in which there are no training colleges. These schools, in conjunction with the organizing teachers, will do much in the direction of solving the problem of the training of teachers for positions in country schools. The practice of the Board is to bring country teachers to the model school in batches of three. Up to the end of the year six teachers attended. Nine teachers have been selected for attendance during the current year. The Inspectors report that the work done by pupils was of an excellent character, and that they expect good results to follow the training received by the country teachers.

*Correspondence Classes for Primary Pupils.*—The number of applicants from this district for enrolment in the correspondence classes recently inaugurated is not large, due in a measure, no doubt, to the fact that the backblocks districts are fairly well served by means of household schools. The experiment of imparting tuition by correspondence will be watched with interest.

*Instruction of backward Children.*—A special class for retardates was formed at Victoria Avenue School. One of the shelter-sheds was converted into a class-room, and a member of the school staff placed in charge of the class. The Inspectors are of the opinion that the results justified the establishment of the class. The Department has recently sanctioned the appointment of a special teacher.

*Manual and Technical Instruction.*—The district high school at Feilding was disestablished and a technical high school established in August, but a permanent staff was not appointed until the beginning of the current year. The new school opened with a roll number of about 120. This school is now controlled by a Board of Managers.

At Wanganui additions and alterations were made to the motor engineering and blacksmithing workshop. No progress has been made with the proposed erection of boys' and girls' hostels. The control of the Technical College was taken over by a Board of Managers during the year.