

Stationery-supply.—Proposals for the direct supply of stationery to schools were approved by the Board after consideration in conjunction with the School Committees' Association and the Headmasters' Association, but owing to certain difficulties, including the inability of the Department to find the capital money necessary for purchase of stock, it was not brought into operation. A material fall in prices was experienced shortly afterwards.

Appointments.—The Board has faithfully discharged its trust in the changed conditions imposed by recent enactment. It considers that advantage would have resulted had permission been granted it to continue the method of appointment which on trial had appeared to satisfy the teachers, to promote efficiency, and to be economical of time and money. It is of opinion that the frequency of changes permissible under the law must be materially reduced.

General.—The Board continues to note with great satisfaction the keen public interest displayed in our school system. It welcomes and frequently benefits from earnest friendly criticism wisely uttered with a view to improvement. It regards as of great worth the voluntary help to the school rendered by the greater number of our School Committees as well as by individuals. As indications of this interest the Board notes with gratification the receipt last year from seventy School Committees for subsidy of no less a sum than £2,199 17s. 6d., to be devoted to many different but useful purposes, such as ground improvements, purchase of library books and pianos, &c. The sense of beauty in environment continues to grow. As in past years, the Board provided trees as required. To all those who have thus by personal effort, often at a cost of great self-sacrifice, secured for the child pleasure and benefit in the course of its education the Board returns thanks.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

T. FORSYTH, Chairman.

NELSON.

SIR,—

Education Office, Nelson, 31st March, 1922.

I have the honour to present the following report of the proceedings of the Nelson Education Board for the year 1921.

Board.—The personnel of the Board, which did not change during the year, was as follows: Messrs. F. W. O. Smith (Chairman) and E. J. Scantlebury, East Ward; Messrs. S. B. Canavan and W. C. Baigent, North Ward; Messrs. A. C. Cottrell and the Hon. W. H. McIntyre, West Ward; and Messrs. E. E. Boyes and J. W. Treacher, Nelson Urban Area. The Board's representatives on other bodies were as follows: Board of Managers, Nelson Technical School, Messrs. F. W. O. Smith and E. E. Boyes; Board of Governors, Nelson College, and Council of Victoria University College, Mr. F. W. O. Smith.

Schools.—The number of schools in operation at the end of the year was 138, excluding one part-time school and six side schools. During the year new schools were opened at Mawheraiti, Woodhen Bend, Awanui, Onakaka, and McLaren's Bay, the first two being Grade I and the remainder Grade O. The schools at Farewell Spit, Nuggety Creek, Otaraawao, Waikaraka, and Te Arowhenua were closed during the period.

Attendance.—The total roll number at the end of the year was 7,028, being an increase of twenty-eight over that as at 31st December, 1920. The average attendance was 6,328, as against 6,176 for the previous year. The average attendance expressed as a percentage of the average roll was 90, as against 88 per cent. for 1920.

District High Schools.—Secondary departments were in operation at Motueka, Reefton, Takaka, and Westport District High Schools. With the exception of Takaka, the departments were well attended, and extra teaching staff had to be secured for Motueka and Reefton. Owing to the acquiring of a grant for a very fine Technical High School at Westport, the District High School at this centre will be disestablished next year.

Teaching Staff.—The number of adult teachers in the Board's service at the end of the year was 241. Of these, 140 were certificated or had licenses to teach, and 101 were uncertificated. The number of uncertificated teachers, although gradually decreasing, is still large, due to a certain extent to the great number of small schools in this district. The Board decided to terminate the engagement of all such teachers on the 31st January, 1922, and advertise the positions in the hope of replacing a certain number with certificated teachers and ex-training-college students. There were seven male and twelve female pupil-teachers, and four male and twenty-three female probationers, a total of forty-six on the staff. The Board had the services of three organizing teachers. Owing to the increased efficiency of the schools in the Takaka district, the organizing teacher at that centre was transferred to another group of schools with headquarters at Nelson.

Scholarships.—Ten Senior and four Junior National Scholarships were awarded to pupils of the district.

Buildings.—New school buildings were erected at Mawheraiti and Woodhen Bend, and a new teacher's residence at Stoke. The school at Fairdown was removed and re-erected at Sergeant's Hill. Additions were carried out at Tui and Tasman Street, Nelson. Two schools, Addison's Flat and Maitai Valley, were destroyed by fire. Owing to the decreased attendance at Addison's Flat it was decided not to rebuild, and the school is being carried on in a room of the teacher's residence. Ten schools and two residences were repainted, and a considerable amount of maintenance and repair work carried out. With very few exceptions the buildings throughout the district are now in good order.

Sites.—Additions to sites were made at Brightwater, Nelson Girls', and Stoke.

Training of Teachers.—Saturday instruction classes were conducted in Nelson and Westport, and a winter school was held at Nelson for a fortnight in July, and attended by thirty-seven teachers.