

There were overhauled four residences and twenty-four schools, of which seven were painted inside. Shelter-sheds were provided at four and septic tanks at three schools, with other minor work in quantity not here scheduled. Sites or extension of sites were acquired at Coutts Street, Newtown East, Ngaio, Porirua, Pukerua (partly donated by Mr. C. Gray), Trentham (partly donated by Mr. Cottle), Kahutara (gift of Mr. Bidwill), Kekerangu, Seatoun, and Springlands. The Board considers that where future population is assured, especially in urban and suburban areas, the policy of early purchase should be steadily pursued. Thus many sites should be acquired on the outskirts of Wellington and in the Hutt Valley.

Junior High School.—No junior high school has yet been established, though the site has been procured at Coutts Street. In the absence of early provision here heavy capital expenditure will be necessary at the neighbouring primary schools.

Conveyance.—Public opinion is steadily growing in favour of conveyance to central schools from the surrounding country, where suitable arrangements at a reasonable cost can be made, rather than to increase the number of small schools.

General.—The Board has found it necessary to affirm the reasonableness of the opinion expressed by Committees that prior to the recent legislation the frequency of staff changes was in many instances prejudicial to the best interests of the school. Teachers while seeking reasonable promotion will recognize that, even here, the welfare of the child must be the prime determining consideration. The Board acknowledges with thanks its obligation to the great majority of its Committee members who year by year render valuable honorary service to their communities; to its teaching staff for a year's work of such merit as to have earned the commendation of the Inspectors; to the Minister and his officers, including the Inspectors, for much assistance in solving the educational problems of the district.

I also desire on behalf of the Board to thank the Secretary and staff for the faithful service they have rendered during the year.

I have, &c.,

THOS. FORSYTH, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

NELSON.

SIR,—

I have the honour to present the following report relative to the activities of the Education Board of the District of Nelson for the year ended 31st December, 1925 :—

Board.—The personnel of the Board at the end of the year was as follows : Nelson Urban Area—Messrs. F. W. O. Smith and E. E. Boyes; North Ward—Messrs. W. C. Baigent and S. B. Canavan; East Ward—Messrs. H. J. Hill and E. J. Scantlebury; West Ward—Hon. W. H. McIntyre, M.L.C., and Mr. J. H. Harkness.

Schools.—The schools at Anatimo and Atapo were closed, and those at Fern Flat, Matariki, and Whangamoa reopened.

Scholarships.—There were sixteen Senior and twenty Junior Scholarships current at the end of the year. The Board would be glad to see the age of candidates for Junior Scholarships reduced to thirteen years. Under the present age-limit the primary-school pupil has to compete with the majority of those in the first year of their secondary course.

Buildings.—The chief item in the Board's building programme was the commencement of the erection of a nine-roomed, two-story brick school at Auckland Point (Nelson). New schools were erected at Mid-Marua (Grade O), Upper Moutere (Grade IIIA), Riwaka (Grade IVA). The schools at Owen Junction (Grade II) and Waiuta (Grade IIIA) were removed and re-erected on new sites. That at Dall's Creek was removed to Onakaka. Additional rooms were erected at Hampden Street (Nelson), Tahunanui, Brightwater, and Murchison. Remodelling was carried out at Charleston and Murchison Schools and Tadmor residence. Two new sanitary blocks were built at Reefton and shelter-sheds at Westport. A science laboratory was completed at Motueka. Most of the repairs and new buildings were done by contract, but the Board continued to employ its own painting staff.

Sites.—A new site was acquired at Auckland Point (Nelson) and will replace those at Haven Road and Shelbourne Street. Additions were made to the existing areas at Murchison and Richmond, and new sites secured at Onakaka and Owen Junction.

Conveyance and Board Allowances.—These allowances continue to be very much appreciated by pupils situated in backblock areas, and in numerous cases make it possible for children to receive education who would, by reason of the cost to their parents, be otherwise barred. Conveyance allowance was paid on behalf of 156 children in attendance at twenty-eight schools, and boarding-allowance to fifty-eight children attending twenty-nine schools. The total expenditure was £1,162 14s. 9d. During the coming year the Board is negotiating in two or three instances with a view to having small schools closed and the children conveyed to adjoining schools.

Voluntary Contributions and Subsidy.—School Committees continue to render excellent service in raising funds to enable improvements to be carried out. During the year sixty-one Committees claimed subsidies on cash contributions amounting to £365 9s. 7d. The Board paid £22 11s. 3d. from its General Fund by way of supplementary grants towards school libraries.

Health of Children.—To the School Medical Officer and his assistants the thanks of the Board are due for their efforts in the direction of improving the health of the children. The splendid work of the various dental officers throughout the district is worthy of the highest approbation. Dental clinics