

Needlework : This was satisfactorily taught in nearly all schools. Special classes were conducted in those schools in sole charge of male teachers where it was possible to arrange for the services of competent instructresses.

Elementary Agriculture and Science : The numbers of schools taking these subjects, and the numbers of children receiving instruction, were as follows : Elementary agriculture and dairy science—163 schools, 3,293 children ; elementary experimental science—11 schools, 872 children ; home and natural science—3 schools, 48 children : totals—177 schools, 4,213 children. Equipment and class material have been kept to an efficient standard.

Woodwork and Domestic Science : The Board has made representation to the Department regarding the necessity for an expansion of the training in the subjects of woodwork and cookery by the establishment of additional centres.

Physical Instruction.—Full attention has been given to this important branch of the work. Special remedial classes have been conducted in many of the schools with a most appreciable physical improvement to the children.

Medical Inspection.—The work has proceeded steadily throughout the year. The School Medical Officer reports that there has been a general improvement in the standard of cleanliness amongst the school-children, and also in their dietary and general well-being, the result being a marked improvement in the standard of health of the children in this district. The Board is pleased to record that on the whole the teaching staffs co-operate heartily with the medical staff and assist in every possible way in this important branch of school activities.

Dental Treatment.—Dental clinics are now established at Napier, Hastings, Dannevirke, Waipukurau, Waipawa, and Gisborne, and are proving of great value to the community. Authority has now been given for the establishment of a clinic at Wairoa. Their value has been fully recognized by the parents in other parts of the district, and insistent demands are made for the establishment of additional clinics.

Special Classes.—Opportunity classes are conducted in Napier and Hastings. Both classes have proved of great benefit to those less fortunate children who are incapable of benefiting by instruction in the ordinary schools classes. The number of children under instruction at the end of the year was twenty-six.

Conveyance and Board of School-children.—At the end of the year the number of children in respect of whom allowance was paid (excluding those conveyed on the railways) was as follows : Conveyance allowance, 619 ; horseback allowance, 21 ; board allowance, 109 : total, 749. The total expenditure on the above services in 1927 was £4,901 18s. 3d., compared with £4,071 14s. 2d. in 1926. The figures for conveyance indicate a considerable increase in this important service.

Buildings, &c.—A new school of four class-rooms at Awapuni (Gisborne) was erected, and a building of two class-rooms to house the secondary classes at Wairoa District High School, which had previously been accommodated in portable rooms. New one-roomed schools were built at Arero, Clydebank, and Putorino, and additions made to schools at Morere and Muriwai. A new room was added to Clive Grange residence. Accommodation was provided for a Standard VII at Norsewood and desirable improvements were effected at Ormondville. At the close of the year a start had been made with the rebuilding of the Makotuku School, which had been totally destroyed by fire, and also with the provision of three class-rooms to replace portable buildings and provide additional accommodation at Mahora (Hastings). Mangapapa School was connected with sewer drainage system, and septic-tank installations were made at Clive Grange, Muriwai, Porangahau, and Tolaga Bay. Additional shelter-sheds were provided at Clive Grange, Pakowhai, and Puha, and an extension at Te Hapara. Electric-light installation has been effected where desired in those districts to which reticulation has extended. Considerable improvements were made to Napier Central grounds.

A very fair quantity of joinery and school furniture has been manufactured at the Board's workshop during the year. In addition to the provisions of desks for the new buildings above mentioned and to meet increased enrolments, 489 desks were made and supplied for replacement of long desks and forms. The workshop staff carried out all the building programme mentioned above, except works at Arero, Awapuni, Puha, and Te Hapara, as well as a good amount of country maintenance work.

Subsidies on Voluntary Contributions.—During the year the sum of £1,771 7s. 7d., as compared with £2,023 18s. 10d. in 1926, was raised by School Committees and subsidized by the Government for the purposes specified in the regulations. There has been distinct progress during the year in the interest shown by Committees in their schools. In ever greater numbers Committees take advantage of the Government subsidies on voluntary contributions, and during the year large sums have been raised for all purposes incidental to schools. The most outstanding features of the subsidy applications last year were, firstly, the desire of Committees to establish good school libraries to provide suitable and wider reading for the children ; and, secondly, to provide facilities to enable the children to cultivate a taste for music. In connection with the latter, more has been done than in any previous year by Committees to obtain pianos, and gramophones and good records, for use in the schools. It must be noted that the general improvement in the school-grounds recorded in previous reports has been well maintained, this being almost entirely due to the School Committees, who, with the assistance of teaching staffs, have raised large sums of money voluntarily in order to obtain the Government subsidy for the purpose of carrying out effective beautifying schemes.

General.—The Board greatly appreciates the valuable co-operation of the School Committees, who have practically without exception taken the greatest interest in their schools, and who have co-operated with the Board and the teaching staff in every possible way for the well-being of the children. The Board is indebted to the Senior Inspector and his colleagues for their helpful advice