

and assistance during the year. The Board desires to record its appreciation of the courteous consideration received from the Minister and the officers of the Department on all matters put forward by the Board during the year. The Board also desires to express its appreciation and thanks for capable and faithful services rendered by its Secretary, Architect, and office staff during the year under review. My own thanks are due to my fellow Board members for valuable counsel and assistance in the discharge of the duties appertaining to my office.

I have, &c.,
J. CLARK THOMSON, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, 1914, I have the honour to submit the following report of the Education Board of the District of Wellington for the year 1927 :—

Board.—Urban Areas : Wellington City—Messrs. Thomas Forsyth, M.P. (Chairman), J. J. Clark, W. E. Howe, and C. H. W. Nicholls ; Hutt and Petone—Messrs. G. T. London and J. Stonehouse. Rural Areas : Hutt—Horowhenua Ward—Messrs. L. H. Atkins and P. Robertson ; Wairarapa Ward—Messrs. T. Moss and R. McLeod ; Marlborough Ward—Messrs. D. McCallum and W. D. Pike.

Schools and Attendance.—It had been hoped that the reduction in regularity of attendance noticed in 1926 would be only temporary, but a continuance of the series of epidemics throughout last year reduced the percentage still further. Not since the year 1920 has the regularity of attendance been so seriously affected. It was not till the last quarter that an approach to normal was reached, when an increase in the average attendance of 685 over the September quarter was recorded.

Training College.—The report of the Acting-Principal is appended. It records a year of work creditable alike to staff and to students. The Board congratulates Professor Gould on his well-merited appointment to the Chair of Education.

Report of Inspectors.—The following is the Inspectors' estimate of efficiency : Public schools—Very good, 35 ; good, 93 ; satisfactory, 97 ; fair, 14 ; weak, 1 : total, 240. Private schools—Very good, 5 ; good, 12 ; satisfactory, 30 ; fair, 1 : total, 48.

Scholarships.—Two Heckler Memorial Scholarships, tenable for two years from the 1st January, 1928, were awarded to Maxwell B. Rands and William J. Vine.

Instruction of Teachers.—Saturday classes were discontinued, but an excellent refresher course for adult teachers was held at Kelburn during the May term holiday. The subjects were : Infant-room method, 37 (Miss R. Macalister) ; singing, 35 (Miss C. Perry) ; drawing, 31 (Mr. L. Watkin). Such a course confers lasting benefit on many schools.

Manual.—Handwork was undertaken at all schools. In thirty-two schools in charge of male teachers needlework was taught by special instructresses. The woodwork centre at Mount Cook was under construction. Replacement of cookery appliances was effected at Wellington, Levin, Carterton, Eketahuna, and Pahiatua, by generous gifts amounting to nearly £100 in value. The work proceeded well at all centres, with attendance from sixty-four schools. A reduction of eight schools took place owing to the opening of the Blenheim Junior High School.

Agriculture and Science.—The reports of the three instructors in agriculture show quite perceptible advance. Definiteness of aim in this subject was secured by the new scheme of work issued early in the year. The comments of the three instructors in agriculture are quoted at some length in the Inspectors' report.

Buildings.—The building operations of the Board were marked by exceptional difficulty, owing to the very large and rapid increase in the suburban population, due in the Hutt-Petone area to the Government development scheme. Pressure was experienced also in Miramar, Lyall Bay, Island Bay, Ngaio, Karori, and Kaiwarra. Owing to the extreme difficulty in providing secondary accommodation in the eastern area the Board agreed to hand over to the Wellington College Governors the new Rongotai School (eleven rooms) on completion. The following buildings were erected : Waiwhetu (six rooms), Wilford (four rooms), Opouri Valley (one room), Pukerua Bay (one room). Additions were provided at South Miramar (three rooms), Khandallah (one room), Kaiwarra (one room), Karori (one room and remodelling), Seatoun (two rooms for infant department), Petone West (four rooms—infant department). To meet the extraordinary pressure church rooms and halls and a racecourse pavilion were rented. A new residence was erected at Waikanae to replace the former one destroyed by fire. New conveniences were provided at three schools, septic tanks at two, shelter-sheds at three, and improved heating at two. Painting and overhaul were undertaken at fifty-four schools and twenty residences. Towards some of these works local contribution was made. Owing to the continued development further acquirement of sites and erection of buildings becomes urgent. The Board placed an order for 1,500 desks.