

The total expenditure on the above services in 1928 was £6,202 18s. 2d., compared with £4,901 18s. 3d. in 1927. These figures indicate a further considerable extension in this service. New conveyances have been instituted in various localities to avoid the establishment of new schools of Grade I or Grade II. Several other schemes for consolidation involving the closing of certain schools and the conveyance of the children to centralized schools are now under consideration. The benefits derived from consolidation are outstanding in existing cases in this district, and the Board strongly supports a vigorous prosecution of the policy in this direction.

Buildings, &c.—The Board's building programme again suffered some curtailment owing to the financial stringency, and so far it has not been possible to obtain grants for any of the three rebuilding proposals which have been on the Board's list of works for quite a number of years. These proposals have been strongly advocated for a considerable time, and the Board sincerely hopes that an effort will be made to carry out at least one of these long-delayed works during the current financial year. New schools were erected at East Cape and Tarawera; additions were made to schools at Kaiwaka, Kotemaori (railway-camp), Parkvale (fresh-air room), Porangahau, and Puketitiri; the rebuilding of Makituku School, which had been destroyed by fire, and the additions at Mahora to replace portable buildings, were both completed; and the erection of a new building for the secondary department at Te Karaka and certain remodelling at Woodville satisfied a much-needed requirement in respect of accommodation at both these schools. Partial remodelling was also carried out at Clive School. The Board acquired a building from the Public Works Department to replace temporary school premises used at Rere. The portable residence at Ruaroa was dismantled, transported to Waikatea, and re-erected there, and a start was made at the end of the year with a new school for Mangarube Valley.

With the exception of two works, the Board's workshop staff erected all the buildings comprised in the programme of new schools and additions outlined above, and also carried out a good deal of country maintenance-work. In addition to usual school joinery and desks for new buildings and increased enrolments, the workshop supplied 190 dual desks for replacement of long desks and forms.

The additional fresh-air room erected at Parkvale was of a different type from the one already existing at this school. The conditions in each of these fresh-air class-rooms and in the main class-rooms are being carefully recorded for comparative purposes, with a view to assisting the Board to determine its policy in this matter, and also to assist in ascertaining the most suitable type of fresh-air building for this district.

Subsidies on Voluntary Contributions.—During the year the sum of £2,301 15s. 9d., as compared with £1,771 7s. 7d. in 1927, was raised by School Committees and subsidized by the Government for the purposes specified in the regulations. This is the largest sum ever raised in one year, and indicates in a convincing manner that School Committees continue to take a great interest in effecting improvements to their schools in directions for which funds are not directly provided by the Board or by the Department.

General.—The Board desires to record its appreciation of the work done by School Committees during the year, and of their co-operation with the Board and the teachers in all matters for the welfare of the schools and the children.

The teachers also have given excellent service throughout the year. The Inspectors' reports show that on the whole a very high standard of efficiency has been maintained, and that the teachers have worked keenly and enthusiastically for the welfare of the pupils. The Board is indebted to the Senior Inspector and his colleagues for much helpful advice and assistance during the year. Their work has been characterized by courtesy and thoroughness, and is highly appreciated by Board members, teachers, and School Committees. The Board desires to record its appreciation of the courteous consideration received from the Minister and the officers of the Department on all matters brought forward by the Board during the year.

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 1928:—

Board.—Much to the regret of the Board, Messrs. T. Moss and L. H. Atkins retired in August, owing to pressure of business, and Mr. W. E. Howe was defeated. All these were men of the best type; Mr. Moss was senior member of the Board, having served continuously since 1913. They were succeeded by Messrs. A. Donald, A. W. Hutchings, and A. C. Blake, who give promise of devoted service.

Schools and Attendance.—Although epidemics of a fairly serious nature were prevalent practically throughout the year, the regularity of attendance improved by 0·85 per cent., thus reaching the figure recorded in 1926—viz., 89·84 per cent. This result, however, does not reveal the actual position, inasmuch as a great number of quarterly averages, where sickness had affected at least 10 per cent. of the children on the roll, were eliminated. The present cumbersome system of calculating staffs, salaries, and some of the allowances on such an artificial basis should be abolished in favour of something more simple—e.g., the average roll number.

Training College.—The urgency of additional accommodation to meet the growing needs of the district is again stressed by the Board, in support of the report of the Acting-Principal. A careful study of successive reports of three Principals must convince that for that efficiency of training, which