

When it is remembered that the above sum is wellnigh doubled by subsidy, and that numberless unrecorded kindnesses are shown by the Committees and the communities concerned, the Board can but be thankful that such helpful love of the school prevails. The efforts by Committees and staff to create beauty of environment, as well as to promote the immediate purposes of the school by improvements of many kinds, act as an incentive to effect similar improvement in other schools.

Libraries.—The city schools' library scheme continues to promote a love of wholesome reading. Last year thirty-two schools, including the Training College, two Girls' Colleges, and the Technical College, and several schools in the country adjacent to the city, received books, and there were no less than 179,294 individual book issues, as compared with 170,604 in 1927. The Board has now agreed to facilitate the distribution through its headmasters of a letter on the choice of reading to be handed to pupils on their leaving school. The City Council and its staff are to be congratulated on their beneficent work. Through the grants provided and moneys raised locally there is steady improvement in school libraries. Further, central libraries to serve the schools in the adjacent country have been established in Featherston, Carterton, Masterton, Pongaroa, and the Sounds. Special acknowledgment should be made here of the generosity of Mr. J. L. Heckler, whose gifts to libraries, including the Training College, Eketahuna, and Whatman, amount to £131 10s.

Special Classes.—The number of special classes has increased to six—three at Mount Cook, and one each at Miramar, Newtown, and Petone. Their immediate and urgent need is suitable accommodation and environment. The teachers have given excellent service. A number of ladies, forming themselves into an after-care association, have taken a most kindly interest in the children, their homes, and the problems of their after training and life. The annual camp at the Central Development Farm, Levin, under the charge of Miss Johnston, brought improved health, mental and physical, with experience of the farm and the country, new to most of the children. Student, teacher, nurse, and doctor each contributed their part. The children of the neighbouring schools, and other friends as well, showed the young people much kindness by supplying regularly eggs, fruit, and vegetables. A good idea of the practical training provided by the classes was obtained from a really excellent exhibition in the Board-room of articles, the most varied in kind, gathered by the efforts of Miss Valentine and the teachers of the various classes throughout the Dominion. Incidentally, the exhibition showed what a complex problem is that of the retardate.

Reorganization: The Syllabus.—The long delay in declaring a definite policy in relation to the junior high school and organization has caused much inconvenience in rising districts, as, in these, grants for buildings have in many instances, been deferred. On the Syllabus Revision Committee this Board was worthily represented by Mr. G. T. London. It is a question whether the recommendations of the minority report do not merit a more favourable reception than they have hitherto received. They certainly represent not only the weight of non-professional opinion on the Committee itself, but also a large and increasing body of intelligent public opinion. It is certain, and perhaps fortunate, that the changes determined on will be subjected to the most critical examination both within and without the profession.

General.—In conclusion, the Board believes you would wish a statement of the outstanding needs of the district as the Board sees them. They are—

- (1) The stabilization of staffs so as to reduce greatly the number of individual removals from school to school.
- (2) Further increase of staff where necessary.
- (3) Increased allowances to School Committees.
- (4) A more rapid overtaking of building requirement : (a) At the Technical College—erection of art department. The reasons educational are here unanswerable ; another is found in the rapid growth of the Board's business, which requires increased office space in Mercer Street. (b) At the training College—adequate space to meet natural growth. (c) In localities of increasing population and staff.
- (5) A still more active policy of site acquirement ahead of population in places where growth is certain.

The Board took an early opportunity of welcoming you to your new sphere of duty, and it desires me to offer you that friendly co-operation which, as you have stated, is a condition of maximum administrative efficiency.

I have, &c.,

T. 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, 1928.

Board.—During the year the Board lost by death two highly respected members, Messrs. J. W. Treacher and C. B. Morris. Mr. Treacher had been connected with the Board for a number of years. The vacancies were filled by the election of Messrs. F. V. Knapp and C. W. Thorp.

Schools.—During the year new schools were opened at Aniseed Valley, Nuggety Creek, Tiroroa, Totara Bush, Upper Buller, Upper Tutaki, Win's Valley ; and half-time schools were conducted at Dumfreith and Warwick Junction and at Patarau River and Sandhill Creek. The Big River, Gowan Valley, Kikiwa, Norris's Gully, Okiwi Bay, Oraokau, Owen Valley, Tophouse, and Wairangi Schools