

## WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Education Office, Wanganui, March, 1895.

In accordance with the provisions of section 102 of "The Education Act, 1877," the Education Board for the District of Wanganui has the honour to submit the following report of its proceedings for the year ending 31st December, 1894 :—

**BOARD.**—At the beginning of the year the Board consisted of the following members Messrs. John Notman (Chairman), H. Sanson, George S. Bridge, J. W. Baker, J. H. Fry, G. Carson, George A. Hurley, R. E. Beckett, and the Rev. John Ross. The members who retired by rotation in March—Messrs. J. W. Baker, H. Sanson, and G. A. Hurley—were re-elected. At the meeting in April Mr. John Notman was re-elected Chairman. During the year the Board held twelve meetings, the attendance at which was very satisfactory, as will be seen by the following figures: Messrs. Notman, Sanson, Bridge, Fry, Carson, and Hurley, 12; Rev. J. Ross and Mr. Baker, 11; and Mr. Beckett, 8. The day of meeting was in April altered from the last to the second Monday in each month. The executive committee, consisting of Messrs. Notman, Carson, Baker, and Bridge, met thirteen times during the year.

**SCHOOLS.**—At the end of 1893 there were 103 schools in operation. The aided school opened late in 1893 at Mangahoe was not reopened after the holidays, and the aided schools at Mangawhero and Upper Wangaehu were discontinued, owing to the small attendance. Schools were opened during the year at Awahou, Mangamahu, Mangaonoho, Meremere, Nikau, Pohangina Township (half-time), Taikorea, Three-log Whare, and Westmere. The buildings at Awahou, Mangaonoho, and Three-log Whare were erected by the settlers, and the building at Westmere was provided by two of the settlers on the Board's undertaking to purchase it at the actual cost should an average attendance of twenty-five be maintained for twelve months. There were 108 schools in operation at the end of the year—an increase for the year of five schools. The settlers at Poukiou and in the Sandon Block are, with the assistance of the Board, erecting buildings for school purposes. The following shows the classification of the schools according to the average attendance: Under 15 pupils, nine; 15 and under 20, six; 20 and under 25, four; 25 and under 50, forty-nine; 50 and under 75, ten; 75 and under 100, three; 100 and under 150, ten; 150 and under 300, twelve; 300 and under 500, two. During the last quarter of the year three schools were temporarily closed, owing to the want of teachers.

**TEACHERS.**—There were at the end of the year 222 teachers—114 males and 108 females—in the Board's employ. They were classified as follows: Heads of schools—males 44, females 6; sole teachers—males 38, females 17; assistant teachers—males 10, females 27; pupil-teachers—males 22, females 58.

**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.**—The mean average weekly roll-number for the year was 9,264, and the mean average attendance for the same period 7,136. The increase for the year on the roll-number was 455, and on the average attendance 685. There was very little sickness during the year. The following table shows the increase in the number of schools and in the attendance for some years past :—

	Number of Schools.	Average Weekly Roll-number.	Average Attendance.
1888	83	6,968	5,275
1890 ..	87	7,778	5,761
1892 ..	95	8,367	6,365
1894	105	9,264	7,366

The percentage of the attendance on the roll-number is still low. It is hoped that the School Attendance Act will have a beneficial effect on the attendance.

**BUILDINGS.**—During the year schools were erected at Nikau, Taikoua, Meremere, and Ohingaiti, and a master's residence at Waitotara. The contracts for these works were let towards the end of 1893. Tenders have been accepted for the following works: Schools—Kohi, West Waitapu, and Mangaweka; residences—Bunnythorpe, Linton, Te Roti, Ohingaiti, and Mangaweka; and additions to schools—Birmingham, Kaponga, Te Roti, Waitotara, and Pohangina. The school and residence at the last-named place have been moved to a site in the Pohangina Township. Repairs of more or less magnitude have been effected at several schools and residences. A sum of £500 has been set aside for painting, as many buildings, schools, and residences are going to decay for want of painting. The Board has not for some years been able to devote any portion of its buildings' grant to this necessary work. Owing to insufficiency of funds, applications for much-needed additions to several schools have been held over, or declined. It is clear that with the spread of settlement there will come applications for schools in the outlying portions of the district, and it is to be hoped that the Board will have placed at its disposal a larger sum than hitherto to enable it to keep pace with the rapid extension of settlement in its district. In September the school at Oroua Bridge was destroyed by fire, and in the following month the Okoia School shared the same fate. The Government voted the amount necessary for replacing the former, and the new school was ready for occupation after the holidays. It is not intended to erect a new school at Okoia, but the residence has been made available for use as a school. In October the Board engaged a carpenter to execute necessary repairs, and it is expected that a considerable saving will thus be effected. As before stated, the settlers in several localities provided buildings for use as schools, and in many other cases the Committees have contributed towards the cost of improvements to the school buildings and grounds. It is a matter for regret that the Board is not in a position to undertake the erection of a number of teachers' residences. In some parts of the district it is almost impossible for a teacher to obtain accommodation, indeed, in one or two cases the teacher has had to live in a whare or a shelter-shed. The amount paid during the year to teachers as house allowance was just over £700.