

## WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Wellington, 31st March, 1899.

I have the honour to submit the following report of the proceedings of the Education Board of Wellington for the year ended 31st December, 1898:—

**BOARD.**—At the beginning of the year the Board was composed of Messrs. J. R. Blair (Chairman), F. Bradey, W. C. Buchanan, A. W. Hogg, W. W. McCardle, Dr. Newman, Rev. J. Paterson, J. Robertson, J. Young. The three members who retired at the end of March were J. R. Blair, F. Bradey, and Dr. Newman, and Messrs. J. R. Blair, F. Bradey, and E. Feist were elected to fill the vacancies. Dr. Newman did not seek re-election. During the year thirteen meetings have been held.

**SCHOOLS.**—At the end of the year there were 139 schools under the control of the Board, eighteen of these being subsidised to the extent of the statutory capitation grant. In addition to subsidy on average attendance, the Board furnishes aided schools and contributes towards cost of erection. Where buildings are provided the Board, in some instances, pays rent for the accommodation.

**ATTENDANCE.**—The attendance for the year shows an increase of 401 on the books. The figures at the end of the different quarters were:—

	On Books.	Average Attendance.
March ... ..	14,566	12,173
June ... ..	14,423	11,898
September ... ..	14,269	11,818
December ... ..	14,432	11,744

**TEACHERS.**—The classification of the teaching staff in the Board's service shows: Heads of schools—male, 58; female, 11: sole teachers—male, 18; female, 56: assistants—male, 32; female, 65: pupil-teachers—male, 19; female, 157.

**BUILDINGS.**—New schools have been provided at the following places: Makairo, Te Ore Ore, Wharau, Kahautara, Tauherenikau, South Featherston, Alfredton, Taita (to replace the buildings destroyed by fire), and Roseneath, and the Board has purchased the school building on the State Farm at Levin. Timber has been provided and contracts let for new schools at Kakariki and Mount Wolff, and for additions to the Pongaroa school. Additions have been made to the schools at Makakahi and Rintoul Street, and to the residences at Levin and Kereru. A contract has been let for a new school at Mangapakeha. The Vogeltown School has been removed to a more central position at Brooklyn. A site for a new school has been purchased at Island Bay, and contracts let for preparing it for a building equal to the requirements of the district. This, when erected, should relieve the pressure for additional accommodation at Rintoul Street. Additional land has been secured at Thorndon. Alterations and improvements have been made to the school buildings at Pahiatua, Makuri, Tinui, Mangamahoe, Wallaceville, Whiteman's Valley, Thorndon (caretaker's residence), Terrace, Clyde Quay, and Te Aro. A sum of money contributed for the purpose by the Wellington Industrial Association, together with the Government subsidy thereon, has enabled the Board to proceed with the erection of a new building at the back of its offices and Technical School. This will provide a large exhibition hall for industrial works, ample room for cookery classes, and several additional rooms for technical instruction. Contracts were let for painting at Petone, Tawa Flat, Kilbirnie, Mount Cook Girls', Mount Cook Infants', Clyde Quay, and Kaiwarra, and for additional latrines at Rintoul Street. At the beginning of the year the Building Account showed an overdraft of £6,243 6s. 5d. Beside the Government grant of £5,000 for general expenditure on school buildings, special grants were made of £550 to replace buildings destroyed by fire, and £4,250 to meet the demand for schools in new special settlements; £250 was received for the old school property at Otaki, and £30 18s. 6d. for rents, &c., £1 12s. 2d. refund, and £7 4s. forfeited deposit. The expenditure on account of buildings amounts to £7,128 12s. 11d., made up as follows: New buildings, £3,286 0s. 11d.; additions and improvements, £2,525 19s. 10d.; furniture and appliances, £304 1s. 3d.; sites, £534 5s.; plans and supervision, £117 13s. In addition to these amounts a first progress payment of £500 has been made from the special technical extension fund (£3,000).

**SCHOLARSHIPS.**—The annual scholarship examination was held in October at Otaki, Masterton, Pahiatua, and Wellington; 169 candidates presented themselves, of whom fifty-eight in Class A, sixteen in Class B, ten in Class C, and eleven in Class D obtained half marks in English and arithmetic, thus qualifying for a place in the list of competitors.

**TRUANCY.**—During the year the Truant Officer has interviewed 660 parents with regard to 806 truant children, and succeeded in enforcing compliance with the law without the need of Court proceedings except in twenty-five cases, in every one of which fines and costs were imposed. In no instance was a summons taken out until other persuasive means had failed.

**TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.**—The director in this branch deals fully with the year's work in his annual report. Instruction in cookery is now given in the town and country schools. The classes throughout have been well attended, and the central school has maintained its reputation by obtaining the principal awards in connection with the science and art examinations of South Kensington.

**PUPIL-TEACHERS.**—The report of the pupil-teacher examination held in December last indicates the great difficulties encountered by pupil-teachers who have to qualify themselves for promotion year by year at the time they are engaged in class work, and suggests that, where practicable, in the selection of candidates more attention should be given to the matter of literary equipment. The work done by the pupil-teachers as a whole is considered satisfactory; but the knowledge shown by junior candidates was in many instances far short of what might be expected. Two pupil-teachers, having failed for the second time to secure promotion, were called upon to retire in terms of the regulations. Of the 174 pupil-teachers in the Board's service, fifty-six are classified as ex-pupil-