

Attendance.—The roll at the end of the year was 1,254. The average attendance was 87·9 per cent. of the average roll number, and was reduced owing to the prevalence of sickness during the latter half of the year. Six special prizes were awarded to pupils for attendance during five or more years without missing a half-day.

Teachers.—The number of teachers under permanent engagement was fifty-eight, including eight head teachers, twenty-seven sole teachers, sixteen assistant, three pupil-teachers, and four probationers. The qualifications of these teachers were: Certificated—Eight head teachers, six sole teachers, eight assistants; licensed to teach—two assistants; Matriculation and Intermediate Examination—six sole teachers, two assistants, three pupil-teachers, four probationers; no special qualification—fifteen sole teachers, four assistants.

Manual and Technical Instruction.—(See E.-5, Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.)

Physical Instruction.—During the year the system of free, breathing, and other exercises has continued as before, except that a few teachers have introduced a course based on the new Government system. It is understood that the special instructors will visit the district early in the coming year.

Finance.—In connection with the statement of accounts presented, balances will be modified, as the following payments are due to the Board, viz.: Secondary Account, scholarship grants, £37 10s.; Teachers' Instruction Fund, £150; capitation, technical classes, about £100; and Building Fund, £300. All the accounts, excepting the technical, will therefore be in credit when these amounts have been received.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

G. A. PERRY, Chairman.

NORTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 17th March, 1915.

I have the honour to present the following report of the proceedings of the Education Board of the District of North Canterbury for the year ending 31st December, 1914.

The Board.—The members that retired—viz., Mr. T. W. Adams (North Ward), Mr. C. H. Opie (Central Ward), and Mr. G. Rennie (South Ward)—were re-elected unopposed. In September Mr. J. Studholme (South Ward) resigned his seat on the Board, and at an election held in December Mr. M. Dalziel, who had previously been a member of the Board for many years, was elected to the position. At the Board's annual meeting Mr. G. Rennie was elected Chairman. The following Committees were also elected, the Chairman being *ex officio* member of each Committee: Buildings—Mr. Andrews, Mr. Banks, Mr. Boyd, Mr. Collins, Mr. Jamieson; Appointments—Mr. Adams, Mr. Andrews, Mr. Banks, Mr. Boyd, Mr. Opie; Normal School and Technical—Mr. Adams, Mr. Collins, Mr. Jamieson, Mr. Opie. Shortly after his election Mr. Dalziel was added to the Normal School and Technical Committee. During the year there were nineteen meetings of the Board, two of which were special meetings. The Buildings Committee met eighteen times, the Appointments Committee thirty-four times, and the Normal School and Technical Committee seventeen times.

The Board's Representatives.—Until May of last year the Board continued to be represented as follows on the several Boards of Managers of Technical Classes: Christchurch—Mr. C. H. Opie, Mr. E. H. Andrews, Mr. C. D. Hardie; Banks Peninsula (Akaroa)—Mr. J. D. Bruce; Ashburton—Mr. W. H. Collins, Mr. J. Tucker; Kaiapoi—Mr. J. H. Blackwell, Mr. T. Douds. In May Mr. C. D. Hardie resigned his position on the Board of Managers of the Christchurch Technical Classes, and Mr. S. C. Owen, one of the Board's Inspectors, was elected to the position. High School Boards: Mr. W. K. Virtue was elected to represent the Board on the Akaroa High School Board, in place of Mr. H. W. Piper, who had left the district. Mr. W. B. Denshire and Mr. J. Tucker were re-elected to the Ashburton High School Board and Mr. H. Boyd to the Rangiora High School Board.

Buildings.—The total expenditure on buildings during 1914 was £16,908 19s. 8d., being £8,504 17s. 7d. on maintenance (including expenses of architect's department), £1,460 4s. 9d. on rebuilding, and £6,953 17s. 4d. on new buildings. During the year the sum of £2,395 5s. 3d. was expended on sites, this amount including the balance owing in respect of the purchase of the new site at Akaroa. New schools have been erected by the Board at Beckenham, Bligh's Road, and Ouruhia, and at Linwood and Wharenui substantial additions in the form of new infants' schools in brick have been added. At Hororata a new school in brick, to take the place of the building destroyed by fire on the 17th February, 1914, is now nearing completion. A new school, erected by the Public Works Department by authority of the Education Department, has been provided at Kisselton (Lake Coleridge).

The Board has several times drawn attention to the need of additions to the Elmwood School, where the roll number has increased to 653. As the Bligh's Road (Papanui) School is now quite full the existence of that school can no longer be urged as a reasonable objection to the claims made by the Elmwood residents, and the Board has therefore renewed its application for grant with which to erect two additional class-rooms so that the unsatisfactory conditions obtaining at Elmwood may be terminated. In connection with this matter the Board cannot refrain from recording its emphatic protest against the rule adopted by the Department as regards the purchase of additional sites—namely, to grant half of official valuation. It appears to the Board that where school-grounds are manifestly too small for the number of children in attendance the parents are justified in expecting the Government to find the whole of the money necessary to purchase the additional ground required. The congested conditions existing both at Elmwood and Phillipstown can only be remedied by the acquisition of more ground, which, however, the Board is powerless to undertake, not having the necessary funds.