

Survey of Boys leaving School.—During the year the Board continued to co-operate in the movement to encourage boys leaving the city and suburban district schools to enter secondary or technical schools. As a result of these efforts, made under the personal direction of the authorities controlling the Boys' Gordon Hall, to whom the best thanks of all concerned are due, there has been an appreciable increase in the number of boys continuing their education. The Board hopes that in future girls will be included in the movement, and that as far as practicable all pupils failing to carry on their education will be visited and have the advantages of secondary education explained to them.

Physical Education.—Early in the year 1914 it was proposed that the Board's teachers should be assembled in the following September for physical training. A commencement, however, was not made till the 25th January of the present year, when classes for teachers of the city and suburban schools were held. The second session opened on the 22nd March, with a large attendance, practically all the schools in the South Ward and some others being represented. The third session for the remaining schools in the North Ward will be held early in May. The Senior Inspector reports that during the last year physical instruction has been given in the Board's schools on the same lines as formerly, and that in future all physical instruction will be in strict accordance with the latest developments. The result must be highly beneficial to the health and general welfare of the pupils.

The Education Act, 1914.—When the Education Bill was before Parliament last year the Board brought under the Minister's notice several matters in which modification appeared desirable. With many of the changes made the Board is in agreement. The Board, however, regrets the centralizing tendencies of the new Act, as shown by the transfer of Inspectors to the Education Department, by the new method of appointment of teachers, and by the restricted powers left with Education Boards as regards establishing new schools. With reference to the proposed incorporation of the West Coast education districts into Canterbury, the Board is of opinion that the proposal is not in the best interests of education, owing to the great diversity of interests and to the special geographical position of the West Coast.

Valedictory.—As this will be almost the last report of the proceedings of the North Canterbury Education Board as at present constituted, the Board desires to express its appreciation of the manner in which School Committees generally have co-operated with the Board in administering the Act. The thanks of the Board are also due to the Inspectors and teachers for the efficient discharge of the highly responsible work intrusted to them, and to the Secretary and the office staff for the satisfactory manner in which they have at all times discharged their duties.

GEORGE RENNIE, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

SOUTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Timaru, March, 1915.

I have the honour to submit, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, the annual report of the Education Board of the District of South Canterbury for the year ending the 31st December, 1914.

The Board.—At the beginning of the year the Board consisted of the following members: Messrs. J. S. Rutherford (Chairman), G. W. Armitage, W. M. Hamilton, Wm. Lindsay, George Lyall, John Maze, G. J. Sealey, and Thomas Sherratt. Messrs. Howard and Lyall, whose term of office expired in August, were re-elected unopposed, while Mr. Armitage was re-elected by a majority of forty-four over his opponent, Mr. R. Macaulay. At the annual meeting of the Board Mr. S. J. Rutherford was re-elected Chairman. During the year the Board held twenty-one ordinary meetings and one special meeting, the average attendance at the ordinary meetings being 8.3.

Officers and Staff.—According to the provisions of the Education Act, 1914, with the close of the year the Inspectors passed out of the control of the Board to become officers of the Department. The Board views this step with mixed feelings, but trusts that, in spite of the change of control, the harmonious and entirely satisfactory relations of so many years may long be continued. In August Mr. W. Martin, B.Sc., left this district to become chief agricultural instructor in North Canterbury, and his place was taken by Mr. John Moodie, who had been for some years agricultural instructor in Southland District.

The Schools.—At the end of the year there were eighty-five schools at work in this district. During the year the schools at Struan, Skipton, and Burke's Pass were closed owing to reduced attendance, while the school at Kohika was re-opened in February, and a new school was established at Four Peaks in a cottage rented from one of the settlers.

For 1914 the schools of the district were graded thus—

Grade of School.	Average Attendance.	Number of Schools.	Total Attendance.
Grade 0	1 to 8	1	8
„ I	9 „ 15	12	149
„ II	16 „ 25	26	509
„ III	26 „ 35	19	554
„ IV	36 „ 80	14	630
„ V	81 „ 120	5	450
„ VI	121 „ 200	2	300
„ VII	201 „ 300	1	221
„ VIII	301 „ 450	2	832
„ IX	451 „ 600	2	1,031
„ X	over 600	1	857

At the three district high schools the averages were: Waimate, 53; Temuka, 30; Pleasant Point, 21.