

affectionate regard by all those who had the privilege of his acquaintance. It is the intention of the Board not to appoint a successor to Mr. Milnes until after the war, and to allow the present arrangements for the conduct of the Training College and Normal School to continue in the meantime.

Manual and Technical Instruction.—During the year manual-training schools were built at Matamata and Te Kuiti, and steps are being taken to provide manual-training schools at Rotorua, Huntly, Te Awamutu, Northcote, and Coromandel. The manual-training schools in Auckland City are overcrowded, and it is hoped that another school will be built at Kingsland during 1918. Classes were held at the following centres: Te Kuiti, Dargaville, Whangarei, Devonport, Otahuhu, Pukekohe, Hamilton, Thames, Waihi, Te Aroha, Matamata, Te Kopuru. The numbers in attendance at the various technical schools are steadily increasing, and the general efficiency of the work shows a marked improvement. The main subjects taken at the various centres are English, arithmetic, book-keeping, shorthand, typewriting, dressmaking, home science, woodwork and trade drawing, with the addition of plumbing at Thames, and plumbing and engineering at Hamilton. Application has been made for a grant for the erection of new technical-school buildings at Hamilton. A building consisting of a science-room and a class-room is being erected at the Morrinsville School.

The Board has made the rural course compulsory for all first- and second-year students in district high schools. The following are the district high schools: Aratapu, Pukekohe, Coromandel, Paeroa, Waihi, Tauranga, Te Kuiti, Cambridge; and to these, for 1918, will be added the newly established district high schools at Huntly, Taumarunui, and Matamata. It has been decided to increase the number of instructors in agriculture from three to five for the year 1918, and accordingly two additional instructors have been appointed. A teachers' farm school held at Ruakura Government Farm of Instruction during January was attended by about ninety teachers, and proved very successful. The Manager, Mr. A. W. Green, and officers of the Ruakura Farm, and Mr. J. Brown, B.Sc., Director of Agricultural Department, and officers of the Agricultural Department, gave every assistance, and the thanks of the Board is due to them for their active co-operation. 319 primary schools had recognized classes during 1917 (223 agriculture, ninety-three in agriculture and dairy science combined course, and three in dairy science). Every school in Grade IIIA, with one exception, and not including nineteen city and suburban schools, had recognized classes, as also had ninety-seven sole-charge schools. There are also ten Native schools with recognized classes in agriculture.

Teachers' classes for instruction in dairy science and agriculture, botany, and hygiene were held in January, June, and September; and, owing to the kindness of Mr. E. C. Isaac, Inspector of Technical Schools, who acted as instructor, a course of instruction in cardboard modelling and plasticine modelling was given to teachers in January, 1917. There is a great desire on the part of teachers for more instruction in these subjects. Thirty schools held classes in swimming and life-saving. Recognizing the importance of domestic-science teaching, the Board has decided to appoint, at a salary of £300 a year plus travelling-expenses, a woman organizer who will devote her time to the supervision of domestic-science work in the manual-training schools, technical schools, and colleges.

Seddon Memorial Technical College.—The war continued to exert an adverse influence on the College during the year, both as regards instructors and students. In the Technical High School the number of pupils in attendance was 541, being an increase of thirty-three over the previous year. The total number of students attending the College was 1,752, as against 1,837 in 1916, the decrease being largely attributable to the drain on students of military age.

Advisory Inspector.—Since the Inspectors became officers of the Education Department very often considerable delay was experienced in obtaining reports on various matters referred to them, so, with a view to expedite the furnishing of reports on applications for schools, enlargement of schools, selection of sites, &c., the Board resolved to appoint an Advisory Inspector. Mr. E. C. Purdie was appointed to that position at the beginning of last month. Mr. Purdie was formerly an Inspector of Schools in this district.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

J. D. McKENZIE, Chairman.

TARANAKI.

SIR,—

Education Office, New Plymouth, 31st March, 1918.

In accordance with the provision of the Education Act, I have the honour, on behalf of the Taranaki Education Board, to present the following report of its proceedings for the year 1917:—

At the beginning of the year the Board comprised the following members: Mr. R. Masters (Chairman), Rev. A. B. Chappell, Messrs. E. Dixon, S. G. Smith, H. Trimble, and C. A. Wilkinson, M.P. The Rev. A. B. Chappell, representing the North Ward, resigned on the 7th February, and at the special election held on the 26th March to fill the vacancy Mr. P. J. H. White was duly elected.

Schools.—The number of schools in operation at the end of the year 1917 was 153, inclusive of sixteen schools held in buildings not belonging to the Board. During this year new schools were opened at Finnerty Road, Hapurua-Waitewhena, Moss (household), and Te Wakarae, while the schools at Herangi, Mangaehu, Patua, and Shield's (household) were closed.