

*Scholarships.*—Senior National Scholarships were awarded to four candidates, and Junior National Scholarships were awarded to five candidates from the Nelson Girls' College, one candidate from the Nelson College, two from the Westport District High School, one from the Reefton District High School, and one each from the Riwaka and Collingwood Schools.

*Teaching Staff.*—At the end of 1920 there were 235 adult teachers in the Board's service. Of these 129 were certificated or licensed teachers and 106 were uncertificated teachers. In the report of the Senior Inspector regret is expressed that the number of uncertificated teachers in the district is unusually large. This, of course, is accounted for by the large number of sole-charge schools in the district.

The results secured by the appointment of three organizing teachers have been very gratifying, and the Board has received direct testimony to the value of the work and supervision effected by these teachers. An examination of the Inspector's report on the schools under the supervision of the organizing teachers discloses very satisfactory improvement in the results usually secured from this class of school.

*District High Schools.*—The secondary department at the Westport District High School has again a large roll number, and the secondary departments at Reefton and Motueka also have satisfactory roll numbers. It is a matter for regret that at Takaka adequate support is not forthcoming for the district high school there. There are several factors militating against the complete success of the district high schools, the principal one undoubtedly being the inability to always secure a suitable teaching staff. It is to be hoped that a satisfactory scheme for post-primary education will be brought into operation as soon as possible.

*Manual and Technical Instruction.*—I am glad to report that this branch of instruction is, on the whole, efficiently catered for in the district. The Westport Technical High School is directly under the Board's control. Very effective training is given in the day engineering class, which continues to be well supported in the matter of attendance. With efficient instructors for engineering, woodwork, domestic science, and commercial subjects technical education is well provided for in this portion of the district. Thanks are due to the Government for providing a substantial grant for the erection of technical high school buildings at Westport. The contract for the erection of the buildings is well under way, and I hope that with the merging of the secondary department of the district high school into the technical high school the Board will have reason to be congratulated on the efforts made to provide for educational advancement in the district. At the beginning of the year the Nelson Technical School was placed under a Board of Managers. Classes for domestic science, woodwork, wool-classing, &c., were also conducted at several rural centres during the year. The Board is pleased that provision has now been made for grading and providing salaries for manual instructors. The capitation system did not operate at all satisfactorily, especially in a district such as ours. With regard to manual instruction, I have to report that, generally speaking, satisfactory work has been done. The manual classes in domestic science, woodwork, and metalwork, conducted at the various centres are, I think, appreciated. The supervision of instruction in agricultural and dairy work leaves something to be desired. The supervisor-instructor has a large territory to cover, with the result, probably, that adherence to definite courses of work is not easy of attainment.

*Medical and Dental Inspection and Physical Instruction.*—The appointments of a resident medical officer, school dental clinic, and physical instructor are welcomed by the Board. These appointments have naturally resulted in increased attention being paid to the physical condition of a large number of children attending schools, and the work of the officers is highly regarded.

*Attendance.*—The number on the roll at the end of 1920 was 7,000. The attendance for the year averaged 6,176, being 88 per cent. of the average roll. For the fourth year in succession the attendance has been adversely affected by reason of epidemics. I desire to thank the Department for the concession made in the computation of attendance in the matter of staffing of schools.

*Buildings.*—There was not a great deal of new building work undertaken during the year. New schools were erected at Wairoa Gorge, Owen Valley, and Katanga, and an addition made to the Tasman Street side school, Nelson. A residence for the head teacher was purchased at Karamea. Three old residences were written off the books, and the side-school building at River Terrace was demolished. The thorough renovation of school buildings has been carried on during the year, and the thanks of the Board are due to the architect for the practical manner in which he has carried out the improvements. In particular I must draw attention to the renovation of the school buildings at Reefton. It was urged upon the Board for some time that the erection of new school buildings at Reefton was a necessity, but the architect, at a cost of less than £700, has placed the school in a thoroughly up-to-date condition. The buildings in the district are generally in first-class order. I trust that the proposals for remodelling a number of schools will be approved of at no distant date.

*School Committees.*—I desire to express the Board's appreciation of the work and co-operation of the School Committees. It is pleasing to record the local interest taken in the welfare of the schools in many portions of the district.

*Finance.*—The Board's General Account is in debit, mainly due to the expenditure incurred in providing motor-cycles for the organizing teachers and in defraying the removal expenses of a number of teachers who were justly entitled to transfer on promotion. The removal expenses come unduly heavy in a district such as ours, and I would again urge the Department to place teachers on transfer in the same position as officers of other Departments. The debit balance on the General Account will be wiped out during the present year. I regret that there are debit balances on two special accounts. The position of the Manual Instruction Account is due to the large purchase of handwork supplies and to the heavy expense incurred in connection with agricultural instruction. With the improved system of finances for manual and technical instruction I am hoping that the debits on these accounts will be removed before the end of this year.

I have, &c.,

F. W. O. SMITH, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.