

ments are required to the schools at Upper Tutaenui, Te Roti, Hawera, Feilding, Stoney Creek, Manaia, and Ngaire. The Board is paying house rent to nineteen teachers who have not residences, thus entailing a heavy drain upon the General Account. New schools will be required at Bird Road, Ratanui, Rata, Ashurst and Watershed Road, Kaponga, Mangamahu, Mangahoe, Wanganui Harbour Board Block, Pemberton Small-farm Settlement, Foxton Small-farm settlement, Sandon Small-farm Settlement, and Feilding Small-farm Settlement, with a residence for each. The Board regrets that it has not yet been able to procure a school site at Bird Road, where a school is urgently required.

SCHOOLS AND ATTENDANCES.—There are now eighty-three schools open in this district, as follows: Eleven classed as aided schools, with an attendance of under twenty; ten with an attendance of twenty and under twenty-five; thirty-three with an attendance of twenty-five and under fifty; six with an attendance of fifty and under seventy-five; five with an attendance of seventy-five and under a hundred; eight with an attendance of a hundred and under a hundred and fifty; nine with an attendance of a hundred and fifty and under three hundred; and one with an attendance of three hundred and under five hundred. The Moutoa and Whakamara Schools were closed. The Cheltenham and Kimbolton Road half-time schools have now been placed under separate teachers. Cheltenham has been made a full-time school, and Kimbolton Road an aided school. The average roll number for the year was 7,315, and the average attendance 5,435.5, being at the rate of 74.16 per cent. of average attendance on the roll number. The last quarter's roll number was 7,345, and the average attendance 5,510, being at the rate of 75 per cent. of average attendance on the roll number. The average attendance at some of the schools is most unsatisfactory, and the Board has directed the School Committees' attention, in such cases, to the fact, with a request that they will make an effort to remedy the evil. As far as is known, none of the School Committees have as yet put the compulsory clauses into force, owing principally to the very unworkable nature of the Education Act in this respect.

TEACHERS.—There are now 163 teachers in the Board's employ, classed as follows: Thirty head male teachers, three head female teachers, thirty-nine male teachers in sole charge of schools, eleven female teachers in sole charge of schools, nine assistant male teachers, eighteen assistant female teachers, twelve male pupil-teachers, and forty-one female pupil-teachers. During the year the Board found it necessary to appoint a relieving teacher, owing to constant changes in the staff. Besides the above there are nine cadets employed without salary, who are not counted on the teaching staff. The Board has decided that the minimum salary at an aided school must be £50 a year for a female teacher and £75 for a male teacher, the difference between the foregoing and the actual statutory capitation grant received from Government being made up by the settlers in the district of such school.

PRINTING AND REQUISITES.—The Board has accepted fresh tenders for printing and school requisites, the former for two years and the latter for four years, upon advantageous terms.

ART CLASSES.—During the year Mr. David Blair established art classes for teachers at Wanganui, Palmerston North, and Hawera; and, with a view of encouraging the attendance of teachers, the Board issued a circular reminding them that drawing is now a compulsory subject, and offering a bonus of £1 to each teacher who succeeded in obtaining Mr. Blair's certificate. The success of the classes was very marked, as the majority of the teachers took advantage of them, and no less than sixty-five obtained certificates—viz., twenty in one subject, sixteen in two subjects, sixteen in three subjects, and thirteen in four subjects. Eighty-three attended the classes, but eighteen did not sit for certificates.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The annual competition for scholarships was held in July last at Wanganui. Four senior and four junior scholarships were awarded. In future simultaneous examinations will be held at Wanganui, Palmerston, and Hawera, under proper supervisors. The Board has approved of St. Patrick's College, Wellington, as a school at which scholarships may be held, the Principal of this institution having offered to submit to visits of inspection. The competition was open to all schools, but the scholarships were all taken by the Board's school pupils.

CHANGE OF SCHOOL NAMES.—The name of the Kaupokonui School has been changed to Matapu, and under that heading it will in future be found in the returns.

FINANCE.—The balance-sheet shows that the Building Account is overdrawn £2,522 2s. 4d., and has liabilities amounting to £1,451 17s. 3d. The assets consist of the amount due from Government (since received) of £1,218 18s. 9d.; leaving a net liability over assets of £2,755 0s. 10d. The General Account shows a credit of £5,574 11s. 10d., with liabilities amounting to £1,740 15s. 3d. Of that sum £1,362 0s. 10d. belongs to the Rees Bequest Account, £228 14s. 5d. was due to School Committees (since paid), and £150 to teachers for instruction of pupil-teachers, leaving a net "General Account" balance of £3,833 16s. 7d., as against an overdrawn Building Account and liabilities as above. In the Rees Bequest Account the interest received on mortgages amounted to £188 12s. 10d. A mortgage of £500 was discharged, £100 was received from the Building Fund in part payment of the loan advanced to that account, and there is £403 12s. 10d. to the credit of Current Account. The Investment Account shows a sum of £1,900 still on mortgage, £958 8s. on fixed deposit, and £300 still due from the Building Account. The capital sum, therefore, to the credit of this account amounts to £3,562 0s. 10d.

For any further information respecting the state of education in this district the Board has the honour to refer you to the Inspector's report.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

GILBERT CARSON, Chairman.