

phere—these are the conditions of physical development. Nor will the best moral tone be secured by what transpires in the class-rooms, where impressions of right and wrong are much less vivid and enduring than those obtained on the playground, and where the discipline of consequences is much less sharp. The corporate life of the school, too, especially as seen in the playground, affords a stable basis for instruction in civics, for there the pupils enjoy a large measure of individual liberty, retained only by the playground regulations and the good opinion of their play-mates.

We are glad to recognise the earnestness of our coadjutors, Misses Mollison and Fergus, and Messrs. Grant, Brown, Clark, and Bannister; and to the teachers, to whose loyal services to the Board we willingly testify, we owe a debt of gratitude for sympathy and assistance in the work that we have been called upon to perform jointly with them.

We are, &c.,
G. D. BRAIK.
JAMES MILNE.
T. B. STRONG.

The Chairman, Education Board, Wanganui.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Education Office, Wellington, February, 1908.

We have the honour to present our annual report on the condition of the primary schools of the Wellington Education District.

During the past year 159 schools, including ten district high schools, have been in operation—that is, four more than for 1906. Five new aided schools were opened—Homeburn, Kauhiku, Kaikuri, Pakowai, and Pakaraka; while one, Tikaramonga was closed. All the schools in operation during the whole year were examined, and with the exception of Akitio, all received a second visit of inspection. Three of the aided schools were not visited, as they had not been opened when the Inspector was paying his annual visit to the district; and one, Homeburn, was closed a few months after its opening. The Normal School was examined by the Principal of the Training College. In addition to the above, nine Catholic schools were also examined and reported upon.

The following summary is taken from the annual return forwarded to the Education Department:—

Classes.						Number on Roll.	Present at Inspector's Annual Visit.	Average Age of Pupils in each Class.
								Yrs. mos.
Standard VII	...	...	...	...	...	500	463	14 9
" VI	...	...	...	...	...	1,379	1,326	13 8
" V	...	...	...	...	...	1,704	1,626	12 10
" IV	...	...	...	...	...	1,931	1,841	11 10
" III	...	...	...	...	...	2,087	1,970	10 10
" II	...	...	...	...	...	2,097	1,987	9 10
" I	...	...	...	...	...	1,910	1,762	8 9
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	...	5,328	4,491	6 10
Totals	...	...	...	...	...	16,936	15,466	11 2*

* Mean of average age.

These totals, as compared with last year's numbers, show an increase of 127 children on the roll, but a decrease of 275 in the number present at the time of the Inspector's annual visit. There is a slight shrinkage in Standards VII, VI, IV, and I, while the other classes account for the increase.

The rate of increase for the past few years has hardly been maintained, as will be seen from the following table:—

	Roll.	Present.
1905	16,505	15,510
1906	16,809	15,741
1907	16,936	15,466

These totals do not include children attending the Catholic schools with a roll-number of 1,339. This brings the total number of children examined during the year to 18,275.

ACCOMMODATION.—As the question of accommodation, on which we have reported in detail to the Board during the year, will be referred to in the Chairman's report, we do not propose to dwell upon it here. We should, however, like to say that provision should be made for residences for the lower-grade country schools. In many cases teachers are unable to obtain suitable lodgings, a difficulty which not only prevents many from applying for these schools, but also induces successful applicants to leave for other posts at the earliest opportunity. Moreover, the house allowance is not adequate, nor is the salary stable enough to secure continuity of service. The want of a suitable residence and the insecurity of salary are the two chief causes of the inefficiency of many of these schools, and any steps that can be taken to remedy these two defects will contribute largely to greater efficiency.