

Where well-nigh every school has its representative—teacher or old boy—who was writing for us a new page of our glorious history, those left behind naturally laboured with an eagerness begotten of patriotism, love, and pity.

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Finance.—The debit balance on current account at the 1st January was £1,688 14s. The receipts totalled £159,446 14s. 2d.; disbursements totalled £153,946 2s. Balance on current account at the 31st December, *Cr.* £811 18s. 2d. The sum of £7,000 is on deposit for rebuilding, to meet a very much larger liability. In relation to the financial position created by the war, the Board recognizes the need for, and has always practised, economy in its administration; but it has failed to perceive in the financial and trading operations of the Dominion that lack of money which has been urged by the State as a reason for reduction of expenditure even where expenditure is shown to be advisable. The records of trade, of racing, of the totalizator, of the drink bill, of the picture-theatre, of holiday traffic, all point to a full ability to pay for those things which the people desire. Surely, then, it can hardly be seriously suggested that this people, while quite able to pay for its pleasures, is either unable or unwilling to pay the just charge, however large, for the sound education of its children.

School Libraries.—The Board granted subsidy on a number of local contributions to school libraries. The thanks of the Board are again accorded to the City Council and the librarian for valued assistance in promoting healthy reading through supplies to seven school libraries. During the year the single book issues numbered 36,894, and a rough analysis of the subject-matter of the reading of the youth in these seven schools may be of interest: Fiction accounted for 50 per cent.; biography and history, 12½ per cent.; travels and geography, 8½ per cent.; sociology, fairy and folk lore, 17 per cent.; science, over 3 per cent.; useful arts, 2 per cent.; general literature, 4 per cent.; others (including 165 fine arts), about 3 per cent.

General.—The Board accords its best thanks to you and to the officers of your Department for the courteous attention the various proposals of the Board have received at your hands. The Board desires to acknowledge with appreciation the harmonious relations which have continued with the Inspectors, with the teaching staff of the district, and with School Committees. It recognizes that we are living in a very trying time, and it desires to express its thanks for the whole-hearted zeal with which the various branches of the service have faced the special difficulties arising from the war. As Parliament last session determined that the Marlborough Education District should be added to the Wellington Education District, the Board wishes to say that, while for reasons which it considered valid it was unwilling that the Wellington District should be extended into the South Island, it will nevertheless endeavour to discharge with fidelity, impartiality, and zeal the new duties which will shortly devolve upon it.

I have, &c.,

J. G. W. AITKEN, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

HAWKE'S BAY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Napier, 31st March, 1916.

In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act the Education Board of the District of Hawke's Bay has the honour to submit the following report of its proceedings during the year 1915:—

Board.—The personnel of the Board has undergone no change during the year. The following is the membership: North Ward—Messrs. M. McLeod, J. R. Kirk, and C. H. Bridge; Middle Ward—Messrs. J. A. Miller, G. F. Roach, and J. H. Sheath; South Ward—Rev. A. Grant, Messrs. W. G. Hunter, and P. G. Grant. Mr. J. H. Sheath was re-elected Chairman. The Rev. A. Grant, Dr. Reid McKay, and Mr. W. G. Hunter represented the Board on the Dannevirke High School Board of Governors; Messrs. J. H. Sheath and J. A. Miller on the Napier High School Board; Messrs. J. H. Sheath and G. F. Roach on the Board of Managers of the Napier Technical College; and Messrs. W. G. Downes and W. J. Pellow on the Board of Managers of the Waipawa Technical Associated Classes.

Number of Schools.—The number of schools in operation at the end of 1914 was 142. During 1915 new schools were opened at Pehiri, Waihau, Waimata Valley, Tanguru, Waikari, Arlington, Clifton, Wharerata, and Patangata, while the schools at Hangaroa, Mangatuna, and Wheturau were closed, leaving 148 schools in operation at the end of the year.

Attendance.—The number of children attending public schools in the district continues to increase. The number on the roll at the end of the year was 12,757, an increase of 254 during the year. The average roll increased 467, and the average attendance 324. The following table showing the increases during the past nine years may be of interest:—

Year.	Number of Schools.	Average. Roll.	Average. Attendance.	Percentage of Attendance.
1907	101	9,409	7,878	83·7
1914	142	12,149	11,069	91·1
1915	148	12,616	11,392	90·3

Though a very severe epidemic of measles was prevalent during the last quarter of the year, the percentage of attendance is regarded as satisfactory.