

there were open 196 main schools, three side schools, and four half-time schools, graded as follows: Grade 0, 11; Grade 1, 63; Grade II, 35; Grade IIIA, 49; Grade IIIB, 12; Grade IVA, 9; Grade IVB, 2; Grade IVc, 1; Grade VA, 4; Grade VB, 3; Grade Vc, 1; Grade Vd, 2; Grade VIA, 1; Grade VIB, 4; Grade VIC, 1. The number of district high schools was six.

The number of children on the rolls at the close of the year was 15,204. Of these, 129 were in the secondary departments of district high schools. The average attendance for the year was 13,543, which expressed as a percentage of the average weekly roll number was 89.9. This is 1.4 higher than the previous year. The Truant Officer paid 274 visits to schools. 182 summonses were issued to parents. In the 147 cases proceeded with five were dismissed and 142 convictions were recorded. The fines inflicted and the costs awarded amounted to £81 ls. 10d.

*Teachers.*—The number of teachers in the Board's service on the 31st December, excluding pupil-teachers and probationers, was 454. The number of uncertificated teachers was 170. Of these, ten were in charge of Grade 0 schools, seventy-three were in charge of Grade I schools, thirty-one were in charge of Grade II schools, and fifty-six were assistants. Omitting the teachers in Grade 0 schools, uncertificated teachers holding war appointments, and twenty teachers who were granted certificates early in the year, the percentage of uncertificated teachers was 28.

*Pupil-teachers and Probationers.*—At the close of the year there were nine male and forty-two female pupil-teachers, and one male and twenty-five female probationers. The term of service of fifteen pupil-teachers and eight probationers expired, and of these fourteen entered the Training College. The Board desires to again direct attention to the inadequacy of the salaries and allowances of pupil-teachers, probationers, and training-college students.

*Scholarships.*—There were in force during the year thirty-five Junior National, fourteen Senior National, and six Education Board Scholarships. The total annual value was £1,053. On the result of the examinations held towards the close of the year, at which 129 candidates entered for the Junior and fifty-one for the Senior Examination, pupils of the following schools were awarded National Scholarships: Junior—Wanganui Girls' College, 1; College Street, 1; Wanganui Technical, 3; Beaconsfield, 1; Bull's District High School, 2; Palmerston North High School, 2; Feilding District High School, 1; Victoria Avenue, 2. Senior—Wanganui Collegiate, 3; Palmerston North High School, 4; Wanganui Technical, 2; Feilding District High School, 1. The Lieutenant Gray Scholarship, which was established by friends of the late Lieutenant J. H. Gray, formerly on the staff of the Campbell Street School, Palmerston North, is open for competition by the boys attending the four Palmerston North schools, and such other schools as the trustees may from time to time decide. It is of the annual value of £6 6s. At the examination held in December last eighteen candidates competed, the winner being a pupil of the Campbell Street School.

*Conveyance and Boarding Allowances.*—The total amount paid under this head was £344 4s. 6d. Conveyance allowance was granted on account of sixty-three children in attendance at ten schools. Twenty-five children in attendance at eleven schools received boarding-allowance. It is considered that if, instead of providing a capitation of £8 for household schools, the Department increased the boarding-allowance so as to cover the actual cost of boarding the pupil away from home in order that he might receive instruction from an efficient teacher better results would be obtained than under the present system. Household schools are situated in remote parts of the country, and are attended by the children of one or more families. The parents are called upon to supplement the teacher's salary, and to provide free board and lodging. This often inflicts hardship, especially where the settlers are in new country, and it seems unfair that they should be required to contribute in this way. The whole question of grants for the conveyance and board of children urgently requires attention.

*Voluntary Contributions.*—The sum of £841 10s. 11d. was received in contributions for primary schools and £316 15s. 6d. for manual and technical instruction. A contribution of £100 towards the erection of a school at Nukumarū was promised, and at Nukumarū, Omahine, Mount Richards Road, and Upper Retaruke sites for schools were given free. This generosity on the part of parents and others has enabled the Board to carry out many works which it would otherwise have had to abandon or at least postpone; to establish new libraries and enlarge others; and to provide apparatus for Montessori work. To the contributors throughout the district the Board tenders its thanks.

*The War.*—Fifteen teachers have joined the Expeditionary Forces in addition to those mentioned in previous reports. The total number of teachers and officials who have gone into camp is now ninety-two. (For names see appendix to E.—1.) Up to the time the report for 1916 was written seven of our teachers had made the supreme sacrifice. I regret to state that four more must now be added to the number. After very careful consideration the Board decided to appeal for the exemption of teachers in the Second Division. Good work continues to be done by the children throughout the district in raising funds for patriotic work.

*Buildings and Sites.*—The principal works completed during the year were the erection of new schools at Pokako, Te Pou, Ore Ore, Mount Richards Road, Raurimu; the removal of the Brownlee School to Nukumarū; the removal of the Kimbolton School to a new site; additions to the schools at Alton, Tiritea, Manunui, Te Arakura, and Raetihi; and the painting of thirty-two schools and twelve residences. Repairs, erection of shelter-sheds, out-offices, &c., have been carried out at a large number of places. Works now in hand include new schools at Omahine and Upper Tutaenui, and additions to the Carnarvon School. The erection of new infant departments at Campbell Street and College Street, and additions at Gonville, Terrace End, and Ohakea are contemplated. The Queen's Park School, with the exception of one room, was destroyed by fire in September last. It has been suggested that a site in another portion of the town be secured. The erection of the new building has been delayed pending a settlement of this matter. Excellent swimming-baths were constructed for the Campbell Street School. The School Committee under-