

applied for Government subsidy on local contributions totalling £1,076 11s. 3d. This large sum, with subsidy, has enabled the libraries to be enlarged in a number of schools and works of great benefit to the schools to be undertaken on well-considered plans.

Aided Schools.—The Board approves the increased capitation allowed for settlers in isolated places. The problem of the education of the Sounds children is, however, not to be finally and effectively met by an increased capitation.

The War.—During the year twenty-one members of the staff have undertaken military service. The Board records with mingled feelings of gratitude, pride, sympathy, and regret that since the issue of last report twelve members of its staff have laid down their lives. This makes a total of twenty-one. (For names see Appendix to E.—1.) As opportunity offered during the course of the year the Board promoted a number of teachers during their absence on military service. Patriotic effort in varied forms has engaged the attention of Committees, teaching staffs, and children in nearly the whole of our schools, a splendid spirit of willing enthusiasm having marked the workers.

Film-censorship and Posters.—The Board records with regret the failure of its efforts to secure, in the interests of children, an adequate censorship of films. In this connection it considers that, also in the interests of the young, the citizens should, through effective official control, be enabled to veto the display on public hoardings and elsewhere of posters that seriously offend the moral and the artistic taste.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

J. G. W. AITKEN, Chairman.

NELSON.

SIR,—

Nelson, 28th June, 1918.

In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, the Nelson Education Board has the honour to submit the following report of proceedings for the year 1917 :—

The Board.—No change was made in the personnel of the Board during the year. The members are Messrs. G. H. Gothard (Chairman) and D. J. Williams, representing the West Ward; Messrs. F. W. O. Smith and E. J. Scantlebury, representing the Eastern Ward; Messrs. W. C. Baigent and T. Symes, representing the North Ward; and Messrs. W. Lock and E. E. Boyes, representing the Nelson City Urban Area. Twelve meetings were held during the year. With a view to reducing travelling-expenses of members arrangements were made from June to transact the business in each month in one day, committee meetings being now held prior to the general meeting. Mr. F. W. O. Smith continues to represent the Board on the Board of Governors of the Nelson College, and the Hon. A. T. Maginnity was the representative on the Victoria College University Council. The death of Mr. Maginnity early this year is much regretted. Mr. Maginnity was a member of the Board for many years and Chairman for three years, when his ability in connection with educational administration was well known throughout the district.

Primary Schools.—The number of schools at the end of the year was 119, an increase of five, mostly household schools. There has not been any noticeable increase in the settlement of the district, though in the principal centres the number on the school rolls has shown advancement.

District High Schools.—Secondary departments are in operation at Westport, Reefton, Motueka, and Takaka. With the exception of the Takaka District High School, the roll numbers have shown increases, especially at Westport. The Board has had under consideration during the year the question of disestablishing the Westport District High School with a view to enlarging the scope of the Technical High School at that place. It is hoped that this proposal will be brought into effect at an early date. Considering the circumstances now prevailing and the better inducements offered to teachers in secondary schools, the Board has been able to maintain a satisfactory staff in the secondary departments. An effort has been made to establish a rural course at the Takaka District High School. The local School Committee has assisted the Board very materially in this matter, and approximately £200 has been raised in the district towards the cost of the erection of a manual-training school, without which the carrying-on of a rural course would be impracticable. The manual-training school is now in course of erection, but the Board's efforts to obtain an assistant specially qualified to teach most of the subjects of the rural course have so far been unsuccessful. It is evident that the salary that can be offered to such a teacher is quite insufficient to attract a capable person.

Scholarships.—No Education Board Scholarships are now held. Nine Junior National and four Senior National Scholarships were awarded to pupils in this district in 1917.

Attendance.—The total number of children on the roll at the public schools at the end of the year was 6,859, and the average attendance for the year was 6,219, an increase of 310 for the year. The average attendance is the highest ever attained in the district, the percentage of attendance being 89·7.

Buildings.—There are 116 buildings belonging to the Board. Sixteen schools are held in privately owned buildings. There are fifty-one teachers' residences. The only new work carried out during the year was an addition to the school at Riwaka. The school building at Inangahua Landing was destroyed by fire in June, and up to the present arrangements have not been made for rebuilding the school. The small school building at Newton Flat was removed during the year to Ariki, where a school has been opened this year. The Board was fortunate to meet the Minister in conference early in the year, when the position regarding the Building Fund was gone into. The need for more systematic attention to repairs and maintenance and provision for rebuilding was stressed, with the result that the Board arranged with the Senior Inspector to prepare a schedule showing all building requirements set out in order of urgency. The schedule was adopted by the Board as the principal basis on which to plan for the repair and improvements