

schools, or thirty-nine temporary appointments of additional assistants and twenty-four probationary and substituted assistants. These figures give much food for thought. Of a total of 420 teachers employed, no less than 225, or more than 50 per cent., have sought a change.

Agriculture and Afforestation.—Agriculture is taught in all schools in Taranaki, and the expenditure is justified by the results as verified by the Inspectors' reports. The general standard of the work of the Boys' and Girls' Clubs appears to be higher than ever, and the interest of the parents and teachers and competitors is generally maintained. Six hundred and fifty-one animals were judged in 1929, an increase of 125 above the previous year. The Board's thanks are due to the agricultural and pastoral associations and the officers of the Agriculture Department for their hearty co-operation in the work. It may be of interest to know that in Taranaki alone there are now 32,000 young trees growing towards maturity upon rough school sections and otherwise waste land.

WANGANUI.

(Chairman, Mr. W. A. COLLINS.)

Adopted Schools.—The system of adopted schools, which was introduced some three years ago, was not continued during 1929. Whilst in operation this system fulfilled a useful purpose, and will probably be re-established later on.

Teachers.—While the majority of Grade 0 schools are in charge of uncertificated teachers, the number in charge of schools of Grade 1 and upwards is gradually being reduced, and those still employed are located in very remote districts. A further reduction has taken place during the present year, and it is anticipated that in the not far distant future all schools above Grade 0 will be under the charge of certificated teachers.

Voluntary Contributions.—Voluntary contributions received during the year totalled £2,214 8s. 1d., as compared with £1,984 15s. 9d. for the year 1928. These contributions were raised by School Committees for various purposes—i.e., improvement of buildings and grounds, purchase of new sites and additional land, installation of septic tanks, erection of buildings for use as dental clinics, purchase of pianos, gramophones, and records, pictures and special equipment, and the establishment and enlargement of school libraries.

Late Mr. B. P. Lethbridge.—It is with very great regret that the Board records the death of Mr. B. P. Lethbridge, who, over a period of ten years, did magnificent work in connection with the children's health camps held on his property at Turakina. The public knew in a general way that the late Mr. Lethbridge took a keen interest in the camps, and rendered valuable assistance, but only those who were in close association with him were in a position to know the extent of his generosity, the interest he displayed in the welfare of the children, and the sacrifices he made to enable the camps to be held. His personality exercised a wonderful influence over the children, and the many hundreds who have passed through the camps will ever remember him with feelings of love and gratitude.

School Environment.—In a large majority of the schools throughout the district very admirable work has been and is being done in improving the environment, and it may be said that, taking the district as a whole, a very high standard has been attained in this respect. Teachers and School Committees have co-operated, and in a great many cases have by personal effort created delightful surroundings at their schools. The excellent results attained reflect the greatest credit on all concerned, and the value of order and tidiness thus exemplified is calculated to have an important bearing upon the formation of the characters of the children who enjoy the privilege of attending the schools concerned. Some fifteen years ago the Board, having in view the encouragement of teachers and School Committees in their endeavours to improve the environment both inside and outside the schools, introduced the practice of issuing environment certificates to certain schools recommended therefor by the Inspectors and the Agricultural Instructors.

HAWKE'S BAY.

(Chairman, Mr. J. CLARK THOMSON.)

Teaching Staff.—The Parkvale school was approved as a model school in 1928, and was continued as such in 1929. Many teachers, especially those from the country, have attended for a few days to observe modern methods of instruction. The establishment of this model school has been a great success, and the teachers who have had the privilege of attending have expressed to the Board their keen appreciation of the benefit they have derived. The conditions in respect of the supply of trained teachers have vastly improved during the past few years. The supply is now quite equal to the demand; in fact, in the earlier months of each year there is a definite surplus of teachers, due to the annual accretion of students completing their training. The result is that unemployment exists in those earlier months, and considerable hardship is inflicted on many young people. The Board does not, however, agree with the statement that too many teachers are being trained. All students leave the training colleges at the end of each year, and obviously all cannot be absorbed into the service immediately. The Board's experience over several years is that, notwithstanding the unemployment and consequent hardship in some cases early in the year, the retirement of teachers on superannuation, for marriage, or for other causes, enables all teachers to be absorbed by the end of the year following that in which they have completed their training. In fact, in the last few months of each year, the Board usually finds difficulty in securing the services of a sufficient number of teachers to staff all schools fully, and is compelled to seek the services of retired teachers for employment in relieving positions.