

realization of the important influence of environment on the mind of the child, and all those who have worked so hard to bring about the present creditable environment of the Board's schools may justly feel that they have contributed in a most practical way to the education of our children. New environment certificates were issued to 14 schools, and the certificates of 81 schools were endorsed, while letters of commendation were sent to Committees and teachers of 18 schools.

School Committees.—The thanks of the Board, and, indeed, of the whole community, are due to those indefatigable workers—the members of the various School Committees. There is not the slightest doubt that the School Committees of this country save the Government thousands of pounds, not only by raising funds, but by their own personal labour, and I cannot speak too highly of their efforts. They have every reason to be proud of the results of their work in the schools of this district—work carried out solely for the benefit of the children, the citizens of the future.

Physical Education.—During the year the Board was fortunate in obtaining the services of Mr. K. Reid and Miss M. Blackburne, members of the staff of the Auckland Training College, to hold short refresher courses in various centres. These courses were very well attended, and reports show that teachers derived much benefit from the visit of these experts.

School Sports Associations continue to do most valuable work. The enthusiasm shown by competitors and parents at the annual gatherings left no doubt as to the popularity of this school activity. The Board tenders its thanks to all teachers, Committees, and parents, who so ably control this important work.

HAWKE'S BAY.

(Chairman, Mr. G. A. MADDISON.)

As in the past two years, owing to the reduction in the maintenance grant, the Board has had to watch its finances very carefully, and has therefore not been able to give as much assistance as it would have liked for certain services in connection with the schools. On the whole, however, the Board's finances are in a very satisfactory position. The reductions in the maintenance grant have made it difficult for the Board to maintain the schools at their usual standard, but the special grant expended at the beginning of 1934 mainly on painting and renovation has enabled the Board to bring about a very desirable improvement in a number of schools which most needed attention.

The majority of School Committees have recognized during the year that the Board has not had the funds available to carry out many desirable works, and various improvement schemes which Committees have had in mind have therefore had to stand over. Many Committees have, however, contributed liberally to various works, and where the Committees have been willing to help themselves the Board has endeavoured in such cases also to grant some assistance. The greatest concern of the Board during the year has been repairs to asphalt or bituminous surfaces. During the time that subsidies on voluntary contributions were available, many Committees obtained subsidies with the object of putting down such surfaces in the school playgrounds, and over the whole district a very large area of work was undertaken. It has been found, as is usual with this type of surfacing, that fairly extensive recoating and repairs have been necessary, and this has imposed a very heavy demand on the Board's funds. The Board has assisted to carry out this repair work in all urgent cases, as it is realized that if a surface of this type is allowed to deteriorate too far the cost of restoration in a year or two will be altogether too great. The Board has come to the conclusion and has definitely decided that it will not approve of any further asphalt or bitumen surface work at the schools, in view of the recurring cost for repairs. It believes that the best course is to put down all permanent surfaces in concrete. Although the initial cost is very much higher, the future cost of repairs is practically nil.

Refresher Classes.—Mention has already been made of the refresher classes in physical drill. During the year special refresher classes were also conducted by members of the Auckland and Christchurch Training College staffs in art, infant method, and handwork. The classes were held at various centres throughout the district, and the many teachers who attended benefited greatly from this opportunity to learn the most up-to-date methods in these subjects.

In addition to work done by means of refresher classes, three Lecturers from the training colleges visited the secondary departments of district high schools, and gave expert advice in the teaching of rural science, domestic science, and modern languages.

WELLINGTON.

(Chairman, Mr. W. V. DYER.)

Children's Sports.—The Board appreciates the efforts of those teachers who have organized sports gatherings, and it is hoped that this side of school life will be still further developed.

Special Classes.—The results obtained at these classes are very good indeed, and fully justify the Department's policy. Much of the work recently exhibited was excellent, reflecting great credit on the specialist teachers in charge.

School Libraries.—The Wellington Public Libraries supplied 76,301 issues to 36 city and suburban schools.

A total of 31,434 Supplementary Readers were issued in 1934, an increase of 1,310 on the previous year's total.