

financial arrangements have been directed solely to two objects:—first, to making the schools better equipped and more widely accessible to the people; and secondly, to increasing the remuneration and comfort of the teachers.

**INSPECTION.**—The reports of Messrs. Petrie and Taylor, the Board's Inspectors, are given in full in the Appendix. From these it will be seen that the schools in the district maintain the improvement in efficiency recorded in the report of last year. The work of inspection has been carried out in full accordance with the regulations made by the Department, and the Inspectors are of opinion that the teachers, in the management of their schools, have made an honest and not unsuccessful attempt to carry out the programme of instruction laid down for their guidance. The work of examining in the standards has proved more laborious than under the Board's former regulations, and in consequence, the Inspectors have not been able to examine some 54 schools located in the interior and the southern part of the district. In connection with this subject the Board desires to bring under your notice its opinion that the work required to be taught in the smaller schools is of too elaborate a character. It is very generally felt in this district that, in the case of such schools, considerable curtailment of the number of subjects to be taught as separate lessons would tend strongly to improve the efficiency of the education imparted.

The following statement shows the number of pupils examined in each standard, the number and the percentage of passes, and the average age for each standard.

Standard.	Presented.	Passed.	Percentage.	Average Age.	
				Years.	Months.
I.	1,913	1,512	79	9	0
II.	1,880	1,630	87	10	5
III.	1,489	1,099	74	11	6
IV.	933	688	68	12	9
V.	439	324	74	13	7
VI.	183	118	89	14	5
Total ...	6,787	5,321	78.4		

Had the Inspectors been able to examine all the schools in the district, the numbers in the above table would have been much greater.

**NORMAL SCHOOL.**—The report of the Rector of the Normal School is appended. Four small rooms have been erected to serve as model schools, and they appear to have proved of great use in connection with the training of the students. A spacious, lofty, and well-appointed gymnasium has also been provided, and the services of a competent instructor secured. As every facility is provided for a complete physical training, the Board insists upon all the students in training being taught gymnastic exercises, with a view to their giving instruction therein in the schools to which they may be appointed. As in former years the Normal School has supplied for the Board's service a considerable number of trained teachers, most of whom give entire satisfaction in the districts where they are employed, and reflect no small credit on the management of the training department. During the year maintenance allowance has been paid only to such new students as had been pupil teachers, and to some male candidates who gave promise of becoming efficient teachers.

**SCHOLARSHIPS.**—Last year 12 scholarships—6 junior and 6 senior—were awarded, and the holders have complied with the rules for attendance. At the end of the present year, 12 more scholarships were awarded—6 junior and 6 senior. As the scholarships are tenable for two and three years respectively, when the scheme is fully carried out there will be a maximum number of 30 held every year—12 junior and 18 senior. As this number is likely to be somewhat diminished by resignation, it is believed that the sum at the Board's disposal for this purpose will be sufficient to allow 12 to be offered for competition every year. The appendix contains the examination papers, the report of the examiners, and the names of those holding scholarships, together with other supplementary information connected with the subject.

**SCHOOL BUILDINGS.**—The amount expended on school buildings during the year was £44,522 6s. 4d. Of this sum a considerable part was spent on school residences and re-furnishing existing schools; but by far the greater part was expended on the erection of new buildings. This great outlay has been rendered necessary, partly by the establishment of schools in newly settled districts, and to meet the increased requirements of the larger centres of population, but mainly by the urgent occasion that existed for replacing many of the older schools in consequence of their unsuitability or dilapidation. In the erection of new buildings, the Board has aimed at making them of a substantial character. Wherever brick or stone could be procured these materials were preferred to wood, although the immediate cost was somewhat greater. Special care has been taken to have the buildings adapted to the requirements of school work, and the furniture provided, though plain, is substantial and suitable. In addition to making the rooms lofty, commodious, and well lighted, convenience of movement and of superintendence has been specially studied. It is believed that the large amount expended on buildings during the year is well represented in value by the substantial schools and residences erected in all parts of the district. Except in the smallest sized schools, separate entrances for girls and boys have been provided. In the arrangement and division of play grounds and offices, every regard has been had to the effectual separation of the boys and girls. Although much has been done towards placing the school buildings on a satisfactory footing, a great deal still remains to be accomplished, and this work will in all likelihood occupy a number of years.

**DRAWING MASTER'S DEPARTMENT.**—The report of the head master of the drawing department is given in the appendix. The number that received instruction in drawing during the year was 6,038, being an increase on that of the previous year of 2,328. The classes were attended by 396 students—viz., 170 teachers and pupil teachers; 54 lady students at the afternoon classes, and 172 artisans and other students in the evening. The sum received from fees (ladies' classes) was £105 3s. The total expenditure amounted to £883 12s.