

in Wanganui. Very extensive additions have also been made to the schoolhouses at Kohi, Waverley, Hawera, Kakarama, Foxton, Halcombe, Marton, Mount View, Palmerston North, Feilding, Carnarvon, Turakina, Turakina Valley, Denlair, and the Wanganui girls (old) school. The important works comprised in these extensions have in many instances entailed a greater outlay than at the new schools. New residences have been erected at Kohi, Maxwelltown, Halcombe, Taonui, Feilding, Wangaehu, Denlair, Aramoho, and Mosstown, and others are in course of completion at Stoney Creek and Upper Tutaenui, whilst repairs and additions have been made to the residences at Mars Hill, Turakina, and Matarawa. In addition to the above, works of a miscellaneous character have been performed at every school throughout the educational district. With regard to suitable retiring places, owing to the want of funds, the Board has not always been able to carry out its views in this respect. The plan it has lately adopted in mixed schools is to have the conveniences for each sex in separate parts of the school ground, screened by a fence, each compartment being private and closed by a door.

NEW OFFICES.—The Board has lately commenced the building of new and convenient offices on a site adjoining the Customhouse, granted by Government for the purpose. The building contains three rooms—namely, a board room and secretary's and inspector's rooms. The two rooms hitherto rented by the Board were inconveniently small, and totally unsuited for the increasing duties of the office. As a matter of economy in the saving of rent the new building will also prove beneficial.

WANGANUI DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—The Wanganui District High Schools were opened in April last by competent teachers, whom the Board has been at some considerable trouble and expense to select from a large number of applicants, and it has every reason to be satisfied with the result. The new building, mentioned in last year's report as being in course of construction for the boys, has met their requirements, and the Board is now erecting a commodious school for girls, on a site of two acres in the centre of the town, reserved by Government from what is known as the Queen's Gardens. The plan from which the Girls' District High School is being built, has been slightly altered from that of the Middle School, Dunedin, and is arranged in such a way as to admit of enlargement when necessary, without interfering with the general design. It comprises four large rooms, with hat and cloak lobbies and lavatories. The roof is open, and the system of ventilation adopted is that known as Tobin's. The rapid increase in the attendance of the Wanganui town schools in general, and this one in particular, has exceeded the Board's most sanguine expectations, and it is only now checked by the want of additional accommodation for the girls and infants. In order to meet the pressing demands made by the influx of a large number of fresh pupils to the girls' school, on the appointment of the new teacher, the Board enlarged the old school as a temporary measure. This is now, however, much overcrowded, and it is known that the new building above referred to will be filled as soon as it can be opened, which will probably be during the month of March.

Referring to a request contained in Circular No. 43, that a special report should be made upon the upper department of each District High School, the Board has to report that no examination of this branch has been held. The fees charged for extra subjects at the Wanganui District High Schools are 10s. per quarter for the first two subjects, and 5s. per quarter for each additional subject. The extra subjects for boys were commenced in April, and those for girls in July. The attendances were as follows:—First quarter, boys 23; second quarter, boys 29, girls 22; third quarter, boys 20, girls 25. The attendance of girls is on the increase. Singing is taught in the girls' school as an extra subject by a competent visiting mistress, and has proved a popular class amongst the pupils, besides having been taken advantage of by nearly all the pupil teachers. The fees generally are appropriated towards paying the head master's salary, but the singing mistress receives a small stipend from those which are paid by the pupils who learn singing. Whether the Wanganui District High Schools, as such only, are a success is very doubtful, and the Board will, therefore, initiate inquiries with a view of ascertaining whether the Wanganui High School Act, 1878, cannot now be taken advantage of with profit to the Board and benefit to the district generally. It is probable that the endowments granted to the Board for the purpose may now be profitably employed in establishing a high school proper, which would be better appreciated throughout the district than the so-called mixed system.

CARLYLE.—In the month of August a District High School was opened at Carlyle, Patea. Beyond appointing an assistant master no extra expense was incurred on this account. The fees charged are 15s. per quarter for all subjects, and these are appropriated towards paying the salary of the assistant master. The number of pupils learning extra subjects were:—During the first half-quarter, boys 17, girls 5; during the second quarter, boys 15, girls 2. The small attendance during the second quarter is probably due to the fact of the assistant master having left, but this vacancy has since been filled up.

INFANT SCHOOL.—In January last the Board opened an Infant School in the town of Wanganui, and placed it under the charge of a competent mistress, whose success has been very satisfactory. This school has not only been a relief, but a feeder, to the other town schools. Up to the present time the old and dilapidated building, formerly used for the boys, has served the purpose of an Infant School, although at a considerable inconvenience; but on completion of the Girls' new school, above referred to, the Board purposes converting the present Girls' school into an Infant school, with such additions and improvements as may be necessary. The working average of this school, for the first quarter of the year, was 125 scholars. It is now, at the close of the year, 216, after sending 30 boys up to the District High School, and the attendance is rapidly on the increase.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—A list of the Scholarships held during the year, with such particulars as are required is forwarded. They are all of the annual value of £20. No competitive examination for scholarships for the year 1880 has as yet been held. The expenditure connected with the examination being small, no separate charge was made upon the fund.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—These institutions the Board believes are exercising a beneficial influence in many respects. The returns furnished will supply you with the required information.

TEACHERS.—The Board has now 87 teachers in its employ, and of these 42 are males and 45 females. The same difficulty in the payment of teachers of small schools, which was pointed out by the Board in last year's report, still exists, and the state of the Board's finances does not admit of any alteration. In order to bring the rules of the Board into harmony with the new scale of teachers' certificates issued by Government, the Board adopted a graduated scale of payments for bonuses on certificates. It being