

School-houses are also in course of erection at Hastings, Blackburn, Makaretu, Ormondville, and Friberg's Road; teachers' residences at Hastings, Danevirk, and Ormondville; and enlargements at Norsewood and Kaikora; all of which will be completed in the course of a few weeks. The aim of the Board in providing the necessary accommodation, has been to supply neat and substantial school buildings, useful rather than ornamental. Light, ventilation, and internal arrangements have received careful attention, and everything has been done which experience has shown to be necessary for the wants of both teachers and pupils. In all the schools the Board has adopted the mixed or Scotch system, where boys and girls are taught together. In the school ground the sexes are separated, but for the purpose of instruction, the children—infants, and adults alike—are classified and taught irrespective of sex. No objection has been raised to the system as adopted by the Board, and there can be no doubt that the advantages of the mixed system, where the supervision is complete, far outweighs any objections that might be used against it. At the commencement of the Board's building operations, samples of school desks, black-boards, and other school requirements, were made under the direction of the Inspector, and having been approved of by the Board, tenders were called for supplying them in all the district schools. The desks are arranged in four tiers, running the full length of the schools, each tier having a rise of 5 inches, so that the children sitting in the back desks, are 20 inches above the floor space in front of the desks. The Board is pleased to notice that a similar arrangement has just been adopted by the London School Board in all the schools under its control. The average cost per head for providing school accommodation in the several districts is £5 Os. 3½d., whilst in the large towns of England where school boards have been established, the average cost per head of providing accommodation is as follows:—In Birmingham, £14 6s. 11d.; Liverpool, £15 7s. 3d.; Leeds, £15 10s. 5d.; Sheffield, £16 6s. 9d.; London, £18 11s. 4d.; Bradford, £20 15s. 8d.; Manchester, £12 2s. 7d., and in Leicester, £8 19s. For further information under the head of school buildings see architect's report appended herewith.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.—The second important work of the Board during the year was the training of the teachers. The Board felt it was of little use providing school accommodation if nothing could be done to aid the teachers in obtaining technical knowledge of school work. The grant of £80 by the Department, though far from sufficient in carrying out a scheme of training proposed by the Board's Inspector, proved of material assistance. In the month of June, all the teachers were invited to assemble at the Napier District School to undergo a course of technical training. The school which had only been opened a few months previously under the management of a competent teaching staff, afforded an excellent example to the visiting teachers of the value of organisation. During the fortnight the teachers were in Napier, they were occupied each school day from 9 a.m. till 8.30 p.m., either in teaching and criticism, lectures on school management, drawing, singing, or the preparation of notes. The Inspector's report upon the training will be found in the appendix.

EXAMINATIONS.—The first examination under the Government Standards has been held. The following table shows the numbers who have passed in each Standard.

Standard I.			Standard II.			Standard III.			Standard IV.			Standard V.			Standard VI.		
M.	F.	Tl.	M.	F.	Tl.	M.	F.	Tl.	M.	F.	Tl.	M.	F.	Tl.	M.	F.	Tl.
228	201	429	224	166	390	95	94	189	43	22	65	Nil.	Nil.

The results are not encouraging, but a great advance has been made in the general management of the schools; and now that more adequate school accommodation is provided, it is hoped the progress will be much more real.

A scholarship examination was held in July, when the Board decided to grant scholarships to J. Cowell, C. Laws, F. Steel, C. L. Gallien, and Miss A. Downs, a half-caste from the Missionary School, Napier. The latter would not accept of the scholarship granted, preferring to be appointed as a pupil teacher in the school where she attended. All the scholarship holders are attending the district schools under the Board, where they would attend if they were not scholarship holders. It is apparent, therefore that no advantage from an educational point of view will be obtained for the district by the granting of scholarships until a recognised High School is established at Napier, or the number of the Standards increased whereby extra subjects can be taught in the district schools. In the meantime the money will continue to be spent without obtaining for the district that benefit which is evidently intended by the clause in the Act referring to the establishment of scholarships.

At the pupil teachers' examination held at the same time with the scholarships', the Inspector reported the work of the 1st and 2nd year pupil teachers as very satisfactory. Twenty pupil teachers are now engaged in the district schools under the Board.

SALARIES OF TEACHERS.—Several modifications have been made during the year in the payment of the teachers' salaries. *First.*—The regulation as to payment in schools with an average attendance below twenty has been altered from three pounds ten shillings per head to five pounds per head on the average attendance. *Second.*—Teachers classed in D1, except the head teachers in the Napier and Gisborne District Schools, receive a bonus of £25 per annum. *Third.*—In all schools where certificated teachers are employed, a bonus on the results of the school examination was paid according to the following scale; (a). To teachers whose children obtained 75 per cent. of the total marks in the standard examination, a bonus of £30. (b). To teachers whose children obtained between 65 and 75 per cent. of the total marks in the standard examination, a bonus of £20. (c.) To teachers whose children obtained between 50 and 65 per cent. of the total marks in the standard examination, a bonus of £10. Pupil teachers and assistants engaged in the schools where the marks obtained were not less than 65 per cent. received a proportionate bonus. The Board has reason to believe that the bonus has acted as a great incentive to teachers in their school work, and it hopes to be able to offer a similar bonus during the coming year.