

SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION.—The visiting teachers of singing, drawing, drill, and gymnastics have been employed as usual, and their visits have been extended to country schools. Special attention has been given to the subject of physical training and gymnastic exercises. All pupils are required to attend the classes for such training, but provision is made for the exemption of any pupil to whom the exercises would be injurious. More time has been given to the study of the laws of health. The Board issued a circular calling the attention of parents to the hurtful effect of tight lacing and high-heeled boots in the dress worn by girls, which had been found to hinder the exercises intended to promote the proper development of the body*. Singing is taught on the Tonic Sol-fa method. The results have been fairly satisfactory. Drawing is taught, as far as possible, from models.

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE.—The accounts of income and expenditure have been duly audited, and are appended to this report. The gross income during the year was £73,574 2s. 5d., made up as follows:—The income derived from the statutory capitation grant was £47,231 3s. 10d., and for special capitation grant, £3,180 12s. 6d. £1,076 12s. 7d. was yielded from primary education reserves, and £100 was granted for secondary reserves. The district high schools fees (six months) amounted to £180 12s. The income for buildings was £18,483 19s. This includes the building grant for the preceding financial year (£15,641 19s.), which was not paid over to the Board until March, 1883. It also includes a sum of £520 locally contributed towards cost of buildings, and a sum of £2,310 specially granted by Government for playgrounds. The other items of income were the special grants for scholarships (£843 19s. 11d.), training (£1,977 2s. 7d.), and inspection (£500). The expenditure on office staff and departmental contingencies was about the same as before,† but the cost of inspection was increased through the employment of an additional Inspector. The grants to Committees for incidental expenses of schools amounted to £3,089 19s. 4d. The expenditure on scholarships was £1,025 12s. 7d., but the income actually received during the year from the capitation grant of 1s. 6d. was only £843 19s. 11d., the remainder of the grant (£281 7s. 9d.) having been paid since December, 1883. The cost of “training institutions” includes the training college and teachers’ classes at Auckland, the training classes at the Thames, and the training by correspondence with country teachers. It was almost entirely covered by the special grant of £2,000. The only other special item of expenditure was a charge of £105 0s. 4d. for interest on bank overdraft occasioned by the delay in the allocation and payment of the building grant for the current financial year. In addition to the statutory capitation grant of £3 15s., the Board received £3,180 12s. 6d. from an extra grant of 5s. a head specially voted by the Assembly for contingencies. The total grant of £4 a head was expended thus:—

	£	s.	d.	
Teachers’ salaries	..	3	9	5 a head
Grants to Committees	..	0	4	11 ”
Inspector and examination	...	0	3	1 ”
Cost of Board’s administration	..	0	2	7 ”
		£4	0	0 ”

But for this extra capitation grant of 5s. the Board would be unable to meet the ordinary expenditure on account of maintenance. There are no funds in reserve. The fact that, out of 192 schools, 129 are small or “non-paying” schools, will account for this. The first school on the list (Kaitaia) had an average attendance of 21·5, yielding an income of £86 from capitation grant, while the cost of its maintenance for the year was upwards of £130. Similarly, in the case of

* **CIRCULAR.**—The Education Board of the District of Auckland feel that they ought to awaken the attention of parents of girls who attend the High School and other schools to the hurtful effect of the dress worn by many of the pupils, which dress hinders the exercises practised to bring about the due development of the body. Thus, on the 8th August last, the Drill Instructor reported that some of the High School girls “were so tightly laced, and the sleeves of their dresses so tight, that it was impossible for them to perform the required exercises with any degree of ease.” This in itself may seem a small matter, but it betokens deeply injurious effects. Dr. Richardson, in his book on the Diseases of Modern Life, says: “The worst mechanical errors in clothing are those which affect the chest and body. The tight band round the waist and the tightly-laced corset still play too important a part, and interfere with the free and healthy movements of young girls and women. The effect of the pressure is equally injurious to the organs of digestion, respiration, and circulation.” Dr. Richardson goes on to point out that the same objection applies to the belt sometimes worn by boys and men as to the tight band and corset: “It impedes the free motion of the abdominal organs. It tends to bring on hernia.” He shows the danger of tight garters causing varicose veins, and then goes on to say: “By the boots and shoes made for women and children with high-pointed heels a *more than local injury is inflicted*. Each time the body comes down with its full weight upon the raised heel it receives a slight shock or vibration, which extends through the vertebral column, and, being often repeated, injures the column and its nervous mechanism.” Thus the spinal cord is affected. “The spinal cord, in direct communication with, or rather proceeding from the brain, is the prime agent of movement, sensation, and all that goes to make up physical being: injury to it is destruction to the whole system.” It will be seen that the risk incurred is fearful. To look at the question from another point of view Mr. G. F. Watts, Royal Academy, in an article in the January number of the *Nineteenth Century*, says, “It may be safe to assert that good taste is violated when natural conditions are entirely lost sight of” and, again, “Bad taste, even if proved by incontestable principles, may be regretted and combated, but, if not degrading and harmful, may be submitted to with a sigh; but when vital consequences are involved the question is removed to a higher court, and reticence becomes cowardly. Tender mothers would be horrified could they but realize how much and in how many ways they are destroying the happiness of their daughters in obedience to a stupid conventionality and a degraded taste.” An evil like the one here dealt with is best met with by the force of authority. The Board feel that no words of theirs can add weight to the words they have quoted. They recommend what is now submitted to the earnest attention of parents and guardians.—R. LAISHLEY, Jun., Chairman. Auckland, 14th September, 1883.

† The details of expenditure are as follows:—Office staff, salaries, £1,074 15s. 4d.; clerical assistance, £6 7s. 6d.; office rent and rates, £155 6s. 5d.; furniture and repairs, £14 19s.; fuel, light, and cleaning, £31 14s. 10s.; printing, £145 0s. 6d.; stationery, £69 11s. 2d.; advertising, £94 11s. 6d.; legal expenses, £5 17s.; members’ travelling expenses, £7 5s.; stamp duty, £23 2s.; telegrams, £1 19s.; freight and carriage, £5 15s. 3d.; insurance, £1 15s.; miscellaneous, £14 8s. 10d.: total, £1,652 8s. 2d. (Total for 1882, £1,641 18s. 8d.)