

prospectus, have been printed in book form and distributed to the parents and guardians of the pupils. The following changes have taken place in the teaching staff of the school: Miss Pike and Miss Cambridge resigned in January last, one in consequence of domestic arrangements, and the other owing to ill-health. Miss Will and Miss Alexander, both undergraduates of the University, were appointed to the vacancies. As the school increased in numbers it was thought advisable to enlarge the staff by the appointment of two undergraduates of the University—Miss Hester Cannon and Miss B. E. Gibson—as part-time teachers. Much attention is paid to calisthenics, and the girls have Indian-club drill every morning to supplement the practice at the gymnasium, under a properly-trained drill-instructor. The following honours have been gained by pupils during the past year: Two Junior University Scholarships by B. E. Gibson and M. Lorimer. A scholarship given by the Board of Education in Class E was gained by Janet Prosser, and one in Class C by Elizabeth Stevenson. Three pupils who received instruction during the past year have matriculated, and are now students at Canterbury College.

MUSEUM.

During this year notable additions and improvements have been made in the various departments of the Museum. The Interprovincial Exhibition held in Christchurch during last December and January has offered a welcome opportunity to complete or enrich the New Zealand exhibits in the Museum, principally as far as ores, valuable minerals, and timber are concerned. Numerous donations have also been received from persons living in New Zealand or in foreign countries, of which the lists attached to the Director's report give a full enumeration. Some valuable collections and specimens were received in exchange, and others forwarded from the Museum in return. The Director, with the very limited assistance at his command, has continued to make improvements in the arrangement of the collections, to give fuller information on additional tickets, and to prepare new ones. The art gallery has also received some notable additions, and I wish here to mention gratefully that Mr. George Gould, to whom the public collections have been indebted for so many valuable gifts in years past, has again this year contributed several good pictures to the art gallery. In my annual statement of last year I mentioned that 84,231 persons had visited the Museum. During this year the number has reached 90,514, or 6,283 persons more than the previous year, of whom 31,705 persons visited the Museum on Sundays and 58,809 persons on weekdays. It is to be regretted that the funds at the disposal of the Board will not allow of a larger annual grant being made for the support of this most popular and useful institution.

SCHOOL OF ART.

The school is now well established, and has acquired a reputation for doing good work. Specimens of the students' work were forwarded to the annual exhibition of the Auckland Society of Arts, held in April last, and were highly commended, and a prize was awarded. A similar collection was sent to the Fine Arts Association, Wellington, in July, and obtained a prize and two certificates of merit. Additional fittings are required in the school buildings. Owing, however, to the limited funds allocated by the Board, only the most urgent necessities have been supplied. It is to be hoped that the Board will see its way next year to increase the annual grant. The average number of students who attended morning classes last year was fifty-one, and at evening classes fifty-five; the number of morning students this term is at present thirty-nine. In the evening, there are fifty-one already on the roll, but the maximum number is not reached till the middle of the term. The highest number of students on the rolls for the past year was 482, thus showing a decrease as compared with the attendance of the preceding year. This decrease is owing to the pupils of the Girls' High School having ceased to attend the School of Art, in consequence of instruction being given in their own schoolrooms by a teacher specially engaged for that purpose.

PUBLIC LIBRARY.

This institution receives annually a grant from the endowment for the maintenance of "the School of Technical Science and other educational purposes contemplated by the ordinance of 1870." The Museum, School of Art, and technical teaching at the College also receive annual grants from this endowment. The remarks I have made in this statement respecting the insufficiency of the grants for maintaining the Museum and School of Art, in a state of progressive efficiency apply also to the Public Library. In last year's statement means were suggested by which the proceeds from the endowment might be considerably augmented. A clause was inserted in the Land Bill in its passage through the House of Representatives last year which, if passed into law, would have enabled the Board to increase the revenue from the endowment. The Bill, however, was thrown out in the Legislative Council. The hoped-for relief has therefore been postponed; but I trust to legislation during the ensuing session of Parliament in the direction pointed out last year.

During the past year the Board had to do the best it could with insufficient funds. As there was a very considerable annual expenditure necessary for the support of the reading-room and reference library, which, by the deed of conveyance from the Governor, should be maintained in a state of efficiency, it was deemed advisable that the circulating department should be made self-supporting, and that therefore the annual subscription to the circulating library should be increased from 15s. to £1, that portion of the library being more local than provincial. Alterations respecting the hours during which the library and reading-room should be kept open, and reductions in the number of the staff, were agreed to. These changes would have effected a considerable saving in expenditure, but subsequently it was considered better to allow these alterations to remain in abeyance until after a further attempt was made by legislation to gain increased revenue from the endowment. During the year negotiations were entered into with the City Council, with the hope that the Council and the Board could come to an agreement (to be ratified by an Act of Parliament) by which the library would be under the control of the Council; but the negotiations did not produce any satisfactory results.