

AGES AND STANDARDS.—The 12,254 children on the books are classified as follows: Ages—five and under six years, 910; six and under seven, 1,313; seven and under eight, 1,568; eight and under nine, 1,376; nine and under ten, 1,514; ten and under eleven, 1,423; eleven and under twelve, 1,307; twelve and under thirteen, 1,217; thirteen and under fourteen, 967; fourteen and under fifteen, 477; above fifteen years, 182. Standards—Preparatory Class, 3,098; Standard I., 1,598; Standard II., 1,537; Standard III., 1,722; Standard IV., 1,612; Standard V., 1,254; Standard VI., 943; above Standard VI., 490.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.—At the close of 1893 there were 12,254 children on the books, with an average of 9,713, increased to 9,816 on the working average, being an increase of 414 on the books, and only 95 in average attendance. The epidemic of measles which occurred during the year completely disorganized many of the schools, reducing the average in September quarter to only 9,090, a practical loss of nearly 700 children. During the whole of the period of this epidemic all the schools were kept open, in order that those children who could attend might have full advantage of the education provided by the State. In doing this the Board felt assured that no loss of income would be allowed by the Government for so carrying out the letter and spirit of the Education Act. Had the Board acceded to the requests of the School Committees and closed the schools for the greater part of the September quarter it is presumed the Government would have paid the usual statutory grant on such attendance as then would have been made. If this contention is correct the Board appears to have been a heavy loser for not depriving hundreds of children of a considerable portion of their education. The inability of the Government to accede to the Board's application that payment for the September quarter should be based on the average for the preceding quarter made a difference to the Board's income of £502 10s. The decision to calculate the capitation grant on the working average resulted in a gain to the Board of £67 10s. on June quarter's average and £631 17s. 6d. on the September returns. But for this action the Board's loss would have amounted to £1,201 7s. 6d.

BUILDING GRANT.—The small sum allocated to this Board renders it powerless to cope with the increasing demands of a rapidly-growing population and continuously progressive settlement in the country districts. Year after year the Board is compelled to limit provision, where any can be made, to the bare wants of the time, and provide gradual extensions at disproportionate cost as the available accommodation becomes overtaxed. Each year's accounts show a considerable sum spent in rents of temporary buildings, many of which are necessarily ill fitted for the purpose. From the Board's inability to provide residences in new settlements their choice of teachers is very much restricted, and the future of the children consequently suffers very materially. It has also to be noted that the many school buildings (over 138) under the Board's care can receive but very inadequate attention in keeping them in anything like proper repair. This enforced false economy means greatly enhanced expenditure hereafter.

While still adhering to the opinion that the sum available is inadequate, the Board does not thereby wish to cast any reflection on the Education Department, but merely to give expression to the fact that, through the circumstances of the case, this Board is unable to make an economical administration of the funds at its disposal. No doubt this position is largely due to the absence of any provision having been made by the provincial authorities to set aside school sites.

The special grant towards technical education of £100, though of small amount, and made so many years after this subject has been successfully dealt with in this district, is fully acknowledged as an act of recognition of the efforts in this direction made by the Board. The distribution of the grant for technical education among other Boards as well is viewed with pleasure, and the Board looks forward to fair and full competition with other centres of the colony in the South Kensington examinations.

TECHNICAL SCHOOL.—From the annual report of the Director of the Technical School will be seen the steady growth and expansion of this institution and the continued success of our competition with the wide field of exhibitors at the South Kensington examinations. The completion of the subdivision of the building and the installation of electric light removes the inconvenience of past years, and leaves nothing more to be desired than a reasonable amount of fresh material for studies as the different branches increase in efficiency. Had this school been in Great Britain the sum of £269 10s. would have been received as the result of its successes at South Kensington examinations. The Board hopes that, as the matter of these examinations has now been placed in the hands of the Education Department, the time is not far distant when every Education Board will be enabled to carry out technical work, and thus create a friendly rivalry within the colony.

The Board has decided that an annual exhibition of the work of this school shall now be held within the school itself, and open free to the public, prior to the work being forwarded to South Kensington, in the hope that by these means a more general interest will be taken and a fuller appreciation gained of the various branches of study here carried out.

The Board takes this opportunity of placing on record its thanks to those ladies and gentlemen who have so generously provided prizes for the various classes, thereby creating an additional incentive to hard work and careful study among the students.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—At the annual examination of candidates for the Board's scholarships held in October, 165 candidates presented themselves, forty-two more than the previous year. The examination was conducted by the Board's Inspectors, whose report speaks very favourably of the work as a whole. Of course a large number of those competing do so without selection by the teacher. The scholarships were awarded as follows: Wairarapa, three, at £30 each; country districts, four, at £15 each; city schools, nine, at £15 each.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—The usual examination of pupil-teachers was conducted in December. In all, seventy were examined, twelve of whom, having matriculated, were not required to take all the papers; eleven failed to obtain higher classification, but only four were considered actual failures, the others having been but a short time in the Board's service. The result of this year's classification shows that we have a very large number of ex-pupil-teachers, with very few exceptions