

With very few exceptions the pupils have been very successful in mastering the extensive course prescribed. Of the total marks in the six compulsory subjects the percentages obtained by the pupils of the third year were: E. Fitzgibbon, 97; W. McIntosh, 85. In the second year the four pupils, H. Linklater, T. Learmont, E. Clarke, and T. V. MacKay, produced very uniform and satisfactory results, the highest percentage being 82 and the lowest 79. Three pupils in the junior division secured more than 75 per cent. of the total marks—viz., M. Houston, 83; G. Shaw, 83; and E. Renton, 80. Of the remaining pupils, eight obtained over 50 per cent., and three failed to reach that amount. In view of the increase in the number of pupils, the amount and character of the year's work are satisfactory, and the marks obtained by the pupils mentioned, especially E. Fitzgibbon, are highly creditable.

A. J. MORTON, Inspector.

KUMARA.

The class was opened on the 17th August, 1896, and, in view of the shortness of the time for preparation, a very satisfactory course of instruction has been attempted. The progress made by the majority of the pupils is commendable, seven of the ten forming the class securing not less than 55 per cent. of the total marks.

The highest marks were obtained in Euclid, algebra, Latin, and English. In arithmetic and geography the percentages obtained by the majority are low, but the test in these two subjects was general, and was intended rather to define the requirements for the ensuing year than to serve as a record of work done. One pupil secured high marks in French.

A. J. MORTON, Inspector.

NORTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 17th March, 1897.

I have the honour to present the following report of the proceedings of the Education Board of the District of North Canterbury for the year ending the 31st December, 1896.

THE BOARD.—The three members who retired by rotation at the end of March, 1896, were Mr. T. W. Adams, Mr. H. W. Peryman, and Mr. R. Meredith, all of whom presented themselves for re-election. The School Committees nominated nine candidates for the vacancies; and the voting resulted in the re-election of Mr. Adams and Mr. Peryman, and the election of Mr. Thomas Shailer Weston, who for eight years had previously held a seat on the Board. At a meeting held on the 1st April, Mr. Peryman was elected Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year. At the same meeting Mr. Saunders, Mr. Munnings, Hon. Mr. Montgomery, and Mr. Westenra were elected members of the Appointments Committee; Mr. Adams, Mr. Rennie, Mr. Sawle, and Mr. Weston members of the Buildings Committee; and Mr. Adams, Mr. Saunders, Mr. Westrena, and Mr. Weston members of the Normal School Committee; the Chairman to be *ex officio* member of each Committee. The Board held twenty-one meetings during the year, three of which were special meetings. The Appointments Committee met thirty-six times, the Buildings Committee twenty-one times, and the Normal Schools Committee six times. Notwithstanding the ever-increasing work, caused by the formation of new school districts, erection of additional schools and establishment of aided schools, with the corresponding increase in the teaching staff, the whole of the business of the respective departments has been well considered and minutely reported on, to which the voluminous reports throughout the year bear testimony.

THE BOARD'S REPRESENTATIVES.—On the 19th January, Mr. A. Orr and Mr. D. Williamson were re-elected as members of the Ashburton High School Board. At a meeting held on the 1st April, Mr. G. H. Saxton and Mr. H. Boyd were re-elected as members of the Akaroa and Rangiora High School Boards respectively, and Mr. H. R. Webb as a School Commissioner for the Provincial District of Canterbury.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS.—Early in the year a new school district was formed at Port Robinson, Cheviot, where a school site had been previously set apart by the Government; and in December the formation of new districts for Overdale and Rabbit Island, by the division of existing districts, was resolved upon, which, however, did not take effect until the 1st January in this year. The number of school districts at the end of the year, exclusive of Overdale and Rabbit Island, was 171, in three of which—viz., Charteris Bay, Gebbie's Valley, and Pendarves, school operations had been suspended. With the exception of a slight alteration in those of Willowby and Winslow, the boundaries of the school districts remained unchanged during the year.

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL BUILDINGS.—During the year 1896 new schools were erected at Port Robinson and Rabbit Island; additions were made to the schools at Bushside and New Brighton, and to the master's house at Papanui; and teachers' houses were built at Riverside, Glenroy, Hornby, and Rolleston. The number of schools in operation in the district at the close of the year was 193, of which thirteen—viz., Bealey, Craigieburn, Mount White, Clarence Bridge, Conway Flat, Culverden, Dalbeg, Gough's Bay, Hammer Plains, Kaituna, Leamington, Montserrat, and Porter's Pass, were aided schools. Owing to the scattered state of the population in the several localities, the aided schools at Bealey, Craigieburn, and Mount White were placed in charge of an itinerant teacher; and it is gratifying to note from the remarks of the Inspector who visited the Bealey, "that the results of this experiment in part-time schools are distinctly encouraging." During a part of the year an aided school at Quail Island received the usual grant-in-aid from the Board, but in September, owing to majority of the children leaving the locality, the subsidy was discontinued. In the month of June, after mature consideration on the part of the Board, the unused school-building at Pendarves was removed to Chertsey, where requirements had outgrown the accommodation, the school till then in use at the latter township being shifted to Overdale for the purpose of a side school. Extensive repairs or improvements were carried out to the school-buildings in upwards of fifty districts, in many