

drill. Their services were withdrawn by the Defence Department when the public-school cadets were transferred to the Education Department. The work done in many of our schools is greatly benefited by the interest which the teachers take in the boys' games, especially cricket and football.

The annual scholarship examination was held in October, when 212 candidates sat for examination—133 in Class A, twenty-three in Class B, twenty-five in Class C, and thirty-one in Class D. Thirteen scholarships were awarded in Class A, three in Class B, three in Class C, and three in Class D. The work done will compare favourably with that of previous years. The new regulations regarding district high schools will make it necessary to revise the system of awarding scholarships. These regulations were issued in a revised form at the beginning of the year, and under them the Board established a district high school at Masterton. The pupils' numbers increased during the year, and two secondary teachers were appointed. The programme of work is at present drawn up to enable scholars to enter for the Matriculation and Civil Service Examinations, but it was pointed out to the local authorities before the school was established that when proper provision was made for accommodation the syllabus of work should be such as would have some bearing on the future life of the children.

The accommodation at Masterton School is limited, but when rooms are built for the secondary department there will be ample accommodation for the primary school. We understand that the matter now rests with the local authorities to allow the land opposite the primary school to be taken for the high school, and when this is decided an application can be made to the Government for a grant in aid of buildings. Applications in aid of buildings under the Manual and Technical Act have been made for rooms for laboratory work in science and for practical work in cookery, and when these and the high-school rooms are built a syllabus of work on the lines laid down by the Inspector-General in his annual report can be drawn up. There is a Technical School at Masterton under a local authority, and if steps could be taken to work the High School and Technical School in close connection with each other the expense of each would be less and the efficiency greater.

To give the other parts of the district the same facilities for improved education as are now possessed by Masterton, the Board should now take into consideration the question of establishing district high schools at other centres—for example, the Forty-mile Bush and the Manawatu district. As the education at these district high schools is free to all children who pass Standard VI., the children in the City of Wellington whose parents are not able to pay fees at a secondary school have not the same advantages as those children who are able to attend a district high school, as the scholarships available for city children are limited in number. Whatever steps are taken to remedy this, nothing should be done to injure the secondary schools now in operation. It is probable that the city and suburban schools could furnish more pupils who have passed Standard VI. than the Wellington College and the Girls' High School could find immediate accommodation for. We have great sympathy with the aim of the Department, and we hope some steps will be taken to extend the benefits of secondary education to more children than can avail themselves of it at present. It is a question for consideration whether a higher primary school, with a course of training framed so as to have some bearing on the future life of the children, in which practical work could be done in science, domestic economy, woodwork, &c., would not meet present requirements. Whatever steps are taken, we have no doubt that the matter will receive the serious consideration of the Government and the hearty co-operation of the Board. The establishment of district high schools at which children who pass Standard VI. can obtain free education means that it is no longer necessary to award scholarships to those schools from which scholars can readily reach a high school. If the Government will allow the Board to retain its present scholarship grant, the money can be distributed as lodging-allowance to the scholars of back-country schools who would otherwise be unable to obtain the advantage of a high-school education.

The Department's offer to examine the papers of the pupil-teachers at their annual examination was accepted, and of thirty-two pupil-teachers who sat for examination all but one passed. Two were absent on account of illness, and sixteen were excused, having passed equivalent examinations which entitled them to a partial pass towards a certificate.

Many of the candidates selected for appointments to city schools are matriculated students, but the candidates for country schools are not, as a rule, as well equipped for their work. The establishment of high schools in the country districts leads us to look forward to an improvement in the intellectual equipment of those who wish to enter the profession of teaching. With free secondary education, it will be no hardship for the Board to make two years' attendance at a high school, or a matriculation pass, a necessary qualification for all probationers. We further express a hope that the Government will soon take steps to establish a training college on the lines already laid down by the Department.

Last year was the first year of operation of "The Public-School Teachers' Salaries Act, 1901." It is too soon yet to give a decided opinion on the working of this Act, but of the changes it made in our district two marked ones are worthy of notice. The number of pupil-teachers under the Board's scale of staffing was 165. Under the colonial scale this number has to be reduced to ninety-five. When the average attendance of a school reached forty-one, under the Board's scale a pupil-teacher was appointed, but under the colonial scale an experienced teacher (called a mistress) has now to be appointed. As these two changes mean that more classes than formerly have to work under teachers of experience, they may be looked upon as improvements. In a school with an average of seventy-six three teachers were allowed under the Board's scale, but under the colonial scale the third teacher is not added to the staff until an average of ninety-one is reached.

With these exceptions the two scales very nearly correspond as far as regards the number of teachers on the staff of a school.