

MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.—The number of pupils in all subjects of manual and technical instruction has increased. The report of the Director, which report is attached hereto,* gives in considerable detail the results of the work of the year. The Board is satisfied that excellent work is being done in this department.

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—The numbers of pupils in attendance at the secondary classes of the district high schools at the end of the year were—Hastings, 28; Waipawa, 38; Woodville, 15. At Hastings and Woodville the whole of the pupils took the rural or scientific course. At Waipawa a few of the pupils continued the literary course. In 1912 it is expected that the whole of them will take up the approved scientific course. The work done by the classes taking the rural course is fully reported on in the Director's report. I may, however, say that the students have taken a great interest and pleasure in the work, and the Board and the parents are satisfied that the change in the syllabus is undoubtedly in the right direction.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The scholarships in tenure at the end of 1911 were: Junior National, 11; Board Junior, 57; Board Senior, 10. At the examination held at the end of December, 1911, 144 candidates sat for the Junior Board Scholarships, sixty-three qualified; eighty sat for the Senior Scholarships, fifty qualified. At the end of the coming year the Board purposes awarding special scholarships to be allotted on the results of a special examination in agriculture. These will be available at the district high schools where the scientific course is taken.

TEACHERS' CLASSES.—The Saturday training classes for teachers was held at Gisborne—science and art; Napier—science and art; Dannevirke—science, art, and agriculture; Hastings—agriculture; Woodville—agriculture. The attendance at all these classes was most satisfactory. Examinations were held at the end of each term, and certificates were awarded on the results of the final examination.

BUILDINGS.—New schools were erected at Kanakanaia, Te Hapara, Ngatapa, Opoutama, Titree, and Wanstead. Residences were erected at Frasertown and Porangahau. The Takapau School building being old, dilapidated, and too small for requirements, was sold, and a new and larger building was erected. The following buildings are now in course of erection: New schools—Makaretu South, Omakere, Marakeke; additions—Havelock, Mahora, Mangapapa, Mangatere-tere, Waipukurau; residence at Wanstead. During the year the Public Works Department erected an addition to the movable school at Otoko. During the year fourteen schools and nine residences have been painted and thoroughly renovated inside and out by the Board's painters. The school buildings throughout the district are, on the whole, in very good order.

FINANCE.—The year commenced with a credit balance of £7,029 6s. 6d. The receipts were £63,502 18s. 4d., the expenditure £63,605 11s. 8d., leaving a credit balance at the end of the year of £6,926 13s. 2d.

I have, &c.,

C. M. WHITTINGTON, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

MARLBOROUGH.

SIR,—

Education Office, Blenheim, 11th April, 1912.

In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, the Marlborough Education Board has the honour to present the following report of the proceedings for the year 1911:—

BOARD.—The members in office at the beginning of the year were: Eastern Ward—Mr. John Conolly, Mr. D'Arcy Chaytor, and Mr. Charles Ferguson; Central Ward—Mr. R. McCallum, Mr. E. H. Penny, and Mr. J. J. W. White. Western Ward—Mr. H. M. Reader, Mr. John S. Storey, and Mr. James Fulton. The members who retired by effluxion of time were—Messrs. Conolly, White, and James Fulton; but all three offered themselves for re-election, and were returned unopposed. At the annual meeting Mr. McCallum was unanimously reappointed Chairman, being the sixth time in succession. Twelve ordinary meetings and one special meeting of the Board were held during the year, the attendances of members being—Mr. Conolly, 7; Mr. Chaytor, 1 (absent in England on leave for nine months); Mr. Ferguson, 11; Mr. McCallum, 11; Mr. Penny, 12; Mr. White, 12; Mr. Reader, 10; Mr. Storey, 11; Mr. Fulton, 12.

SCHOOLS.—The number of schools in operation at the close of the year was ninety-three, being an increase of eight on the figures reported for 1910. Six private schools were visited by the Board's Inspector during the year.

ATTENDANCE.—The average attendance for the year was 2,070, the figures for the four quarters being—March, 2,104; June, 2,051; September, 2,000; December, 2,123. The number on the roll at the close of the year was 2,345, being an increase of 101 on the figures for 1910. The percentage of attendance for the year was 91.60, being the highest yet attained in this district. Now that the standard of exemption has been raised from Standard V to Standard VI a still higher percentage of attendance may be looked for. Many parents are still under the impression that they may keep their children from school on one day a week, and quite a number of instances have come under the Board's notice of children being kept at home to perform household duties. Others are apparently still unaware that a child under the age of fourteen years may not now leave school unless he has passed the Sixth Standard. The Board therefore begs to suggest to the Education Department that when issuing the proposed monthly attendance report-forms it should distribute a placard to be hung in schoolrooms setting forth the requirements of the School Attendance Act. The number of children attending private schools visited by the Board's Inspector was 202. The work of the Truant Officers has been satisfactorily performed. Their reports show that the proceedings taken in the Magistrate's Court were: Number of informations, 56; convictions recorded, 52; dismissal, 1; withdrawn, 3. The total amount of fines received by the Board during the year was £7 15s.

* See E.—5, Manual and Technical Instruction Report.