

other standards. The number of pupils between five and eight years at 31st December last was 6,644, or 30 per cent. of the total roll. The number of pupils in the preparatory classes at same date was 7,548, or 35·2 per cent. of the total roll. The figures for the past four years are given below, and from these it will be seen that the percentage of pupils between five and eight years of age and the percentage of pupils in the preparatory classes have during that period shown very little variation :—

	1910.	1911.	1912.	1913.
Pupils between five and eight	.. 6,473	6,566	6,525	6,644
Percentage of roll number 31·8	31·8	31·3	30
Pupils in preparatory classes	.. 7,449	7,494	7,399	7,548
Percentage of roll number 36·8	36·3	35·5	35·2

The persistent regularity with which these percentages have recurred for a series of years confirms the Board in the opinion that the higher averages of number and age in the preparatory classes have been the product of a fixed period of promotion, in lieu of the promotion of pupils immediately after annual inspection, which formerly obtained.

Sex of the Pupils.—The number of boys on the school rolls at the end of the year was 11,104 (51·8 per cent.), and of girls 10,316 (48·2 per cent.). The ratio of boys to girls was 100 to 93.

There were fifty-seven male and fifty-two female Maori or half-caste children on the rolls at the end of the year, distributed amongst nineteen schools.

Scholarships.—For the five Junior National Scholarships provided under the Act and the ten Junior Board Scholarships there were 185 competitors. Of these, 122, or 66 per cent., passed the examination, and forty-two, or 34 per cent. failed. For the ten Senior Board Scholarships there were eighty-one competitors, of whom fifty-four, or 67 per cent., passed the examination, and twenty-seven, or 33 per cent., failed. The number of candidates for scholarships showed an increase of thirteen over the previous year. [Details of purely local interest have not been published.]

The proportion of scholarships held by males as compared with females continues to be about two to one in favour of the former.

The names of those who held scholarships in December, 1913, and particulars as to the marks obtained by those who passed the examination at the end of that year are given in Appendix K, which also contains a complete list of all those who have held Junior National Scholarships [not printed].

Finance.—A statement of the Board's income and expenditure for the year is given in Appendix B [not printed].

The following statement shows the sums expended under the various headings during the past three years :—

	1911.			1912.			1913.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Teachers' salaries and lodging-allowances	78,048	10	5	81,484	2	1	84,226	6	9
Payments to School Committees for incidental expenses	6,220	12	5	6,170	16	1	6,087	6	10
Erection, enlargement, and improvement of school buildings, purchase of sites, house allowances, manual and technical buildings and apparatus	16,302	13	2	18,243	1	6	23,175	12	10

The receipts for school buildings include grant for maintenance, £10,378; special grants for new buildings, £3,498 7s. 5d.; house allowances to teachers, £1,025 3s. 3d.; rents, £18 11s.; local contributions, £376 5s. 5d.; special grants for technical school buildings and furniture, fittings, &c., for same, £2,609 15s. 3d.; deposits on contracts, £223 8s. 6d.: total, £18,129 10s. 10d.

The main items of expenditure on buildings were: General maintenance (repairs, alterations, and small additions), £10,541 15s. 10d.; rebuilding, £2,581; new buildings, £4,137 2s. 9d.; purchase of sites, £1,872 18s. 8d.; house allowances, £1,036 16s. 7d.; manual and technical purposes, £2,841 1s. 6d.; rents of buildings, &c., £31 10s.; refund of contractors' deposits, £133 7s. 6d. At the end of the year the Board's Building Account was in debit to the amount of £2,712 3s. 4d.

Drill and Physical Exercises.—For many years past drill and physical exercises (including manual and breathing exercises) have formed part of the course of instruction in all schools in this district. During the past year this branch has received satisfactory attention. The Board has not yet seen its way to give effect to the recommendation of the Department that at least one period of not less than fifteen minutes during school hours in each day be devoted to physical drill, and that in addition a breathing-exercise be given at the close of each hour or lesson period in every class in the school. As the training of the teachers of this district in the new series of physical exercises introduced by the Department has not yet been accomplished, the pupils have continued to practise the course of lessons formulated by the Board's instructor (Mr. Hanna) some years ago, and which has been found very suitable. To the great regret of the Board, Mr. Hanna, who has been the Board's instructor in this subject for the past thirty years, found it necessary to relinquish his position. In accepting his resignation, the Board recorded its high appreciation of the great ability, enthusiasm, and devotion to duty manifested by him throughout the entire period of his service.

Buildings.—The building operations for the year may be summarized as follows: New school erected at Puketū; additions to three schools (Benhar, Kaitangata, Owaka); new residences erected (Ida Valley, Tahatika, Awamangu, Totara, Windsor, Benhar); additions to six residences (Coal Creek, Waikoiko, Owaka, Kakanui, Stirling, Otepopo); thirty-four schools and residences repaired; the furniture of ten schools improved; nine shelter-sheds erected; two septic tanks constructed; three school porches erected; two technical schools erected (Palmerston and Owaka);