

Old Scale Payments to School Committees.

Below 20, £15 per annum.
 20 to 30, £15 to £20 per annum.
 30 to 40, £20 to £25 per annum.
 40 to 75, £25 to £37 10s. per annum.
 75 to 100, £37 10s. to £45 per annum.
 100 to 150, £45 to £60 per annum.
 150 to 250, £60 to £75 10s. per annum.
 Over 250, to be specially dealt with by the Board.

New Scale Payments to School Committees.

Between 20 and 40, £10 to £20 per annum.
 " 40 to 75, £20 to £34 per annum.
 " 75 to 100, £34 to £41 10s. per annum.
 " 100 to 150, £41 10s. to £54 per annum.
 " 150 to 250, £54 to £74 per annum.
 Over 250, to be specially dealt with by the Board.

SCHOOL COMMITTEES.—The annual reports which have been received from the various school districts bear ample testimony to the greater interest which is being taken now than formerly in the progress and welfare of the schools. The funds raised by the Committees from voluntary subscriptions, entertainments, &c., for school purposes, are much larger than in any previous year. In several instances a gymnasium has been erected and a school library formed without any assistance whatever from the Board. This is the case at Matawhero, Gisborne, Wairoa, Waipawa, and latterly at Woodville, where gymnastic apparatus has been provided for the benefit of the children; and at Gisborne, Petane, Woodville, and Takapau a fair start has been made in the establishment of a school library. During the current year it is to be hoped that other Committees will pursue a similar course, for there can be no doubt that the school library and the gymnasium are powerful aids in the complete training of children. It is to be regretted that the Committees have not enforced the compulsory clause of the Act, as recommended by the Board. Most of the Committees appear to look upon the clause as useless, and in their reports suggest an alteration in the Act making attendance compulsory. The facts mentioned by the Inspector, in his annual report to the Board, point in the same direction, for they show how very irregular at school the attendance of the children has been in this district, and how futile it is to expect better results in the standard examinations unless the attendance is made compulsory.

LIBRARY GRANT.—The money voted to this district for distribution among the various public libraries was divided proportionately to the amount of subscriptions received by each during the previous year. Although it is probable that no further library grant will be made by the Government to this district, the Board has obtained from the library committees information which shows that the people are learning to rely more upon themselves, and that the libraries will not suffer much from the loss of the Government subsidy.

PENNY BANKS.—No applications were received from School Committees for the establishment of penny banks. As pointed out last year, the Board would like to see a penny bank opened for the benefit of each school throughout the district, but nothing can be done towards promoting them until a much simpler plan is recommended by the Government. If penny savings-bank stamps were issued by the Government, as in England, and sold to the children by the teachers, it would meet all requirements, and would obviate the necessity of teachers unnecessarily occupying their time in keeping a set of books instead of attending to their proper duties.

SCHOLARSHIPS, ETC.—An examination for the granting of scholarships in Classes B and C was held in July; the successful candidates were J. Cowell, C. Lawes, Harold Large, John Burtton, Andrew Guy, and Eva Oatridge. Before the examination in July, a resolution was passed to the effect that, "in future, winners of the Board's scholarships, as a condition of receiving payment, must attend either the Napier Grammar School or the Napier Trust and High School." Four of the holders accepted the condition, but two of them have since given up their scholarships, and have returned to the district school. Last year the Board pointed out that no advantage was obtained in this district from the issue of scholarships, as the children who held scholarships attended the district schools; whilst, during the past year, three out of five winners of scholarships preferred forfeiting their scholarships to leaving the district school. Such results cannot be deemed satisfactory, as they do not in any way tend to promote the advancement of secondary education in the district. As already stated, the attention of the Board has been mainly directed to the improvement of the primary schools, but it is thought that the time has arrived when the question of secondary education should be dealt with. The Board has no high school under its control, but the establishment of a high school for both sexes is much needed, and it is hoped that grants will be made to this district by the Government for the erection of suitable buildings similar to those erected in Christchurch, Dunedin, Auckland, and in most of the other towns of any importance throughout the colony. The revenues derived from the secondary education reserves amount to about £286 4s. 8d. per annum, which, with a suitable endowment, school fees, and the ordinary Government grant, would provide an income sufficient for the maintenance of a high school for boys and girls.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.—The income during the year on account of Committee and School Funds was £9,683 16s. 11d., which, added to the balance on 31st December, 1879, of £2,559 15s. 1d., gives a total of £12,243 12s. The expenditure during the same period for salaries, payments to Committees, and to holders of scholarships, was £9,666 9s. 10d., leaving a balance to the credit of the School Fund Account of £2,577 2s. 2d., less £2,000, which was transferred to the Building Fund Account on December 31st; to be spent in the erection of schoolhouses, &c.

Signed by order and on behalf of the Board,

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

H. HILL, Secretary.