

appointment of a teacher of painting, a teacher of building construction, and a teacher of machine construction.

The school was last year affiliated to the South Kensington Science and Art Department, and the first examination for diplomas in connection with the department was held in July last. The results have just come to hand, and are as follows:—

| Subjects. | Number examined. | Passed. | | Failed. |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|---------|
| | | First Class. | Second Class. | |
| Freehand | 20 | 10 | 8 | 2 |
| Model drawing | 18 | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| Geometrical drawing | 1 | 1 | | |
| Perspective | 1 | 1 | | |

The cost of the school for the year was Salaries, £545, incidental expenses, £41 11s. 6d. total, £586 11s. 6d. Amount received for fees, £123 9s. 6d. Net cost, £463 2s.

TRAINING COLLEGE.—On the 13th of August the Board decided to abolish the Training College, and the members of the staff received notice that their services would be dispensed with at the end of February, 1895. The Rector, Mr Fitzgerald, was appointed to the vacant position of Inspector of Schools. Mr Simmers, the tutor, received the appointment of headmaster of the Ashburton High School. As Mr Fitzgerald entered upon his duties as Inspector in August there is no report from him on the working of the school.

The most important particulars relating to the institution are given in the following table:—

| Students in course of 1894— | M. | F | Total. | Left during 1894— | M. | F | Total. |
|------------------------------|----|----|--------|----------------------------|----|----|--------|
| Remaining from 1893 | 22 | 38 | 60 | Teaching in public schools | 5 | 22 | 27 |
| Admitted during 1894 | 12 | 28 | 40 | Teaching in other schools | 1 | 5 | 6 |
| Left during 1894 | 18 | 34 | 52 | Awaiting appointment | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| On the books, December, 1894 | 16 | 32 | 48 | On leave at the University | 7 | 2 | 9 |

The cost of the institution for the year was Salaries, £890 16s. 8d., allowances to students, £737 15s. 10d., incidentals, £2 17s. total, £1,631 9s. 6d.

FINANCE.—The sum expended in teachers' salaries (including bonuses on classification and bonuses for instructing pupil-teachers) was £60,388 0s. 5d. The sum paid to School Committees for incidental expenses was £4,556 11s. 5d. The sum expended in the erection, enlargement, and improvement of schools, and the purchase of sites, was £7,029 15s. 4d.

TRUANCY.—From the following statement a rough estimate may be gained of the work undertaken during the year for the suppression of truancy. Cases investigated, 215, notices served on parents or guardians under section 91 of "The Education Act, 1887," and section 5 of "The School Attendance Act, 1894," 186, summonses served on parents or guardians under section 92 of "The Education Act, 1877," and section 5 of "The School Attendance Act, 1894," 107, orders of Court obtained, 20, penalty summonses issued (dealing with parents or guardians who had disobeyed the order of the Court), 20. Under the above twenty penalty summonses there were eighteen convictions, viz. One defendant was fined 5s. (and costs 17s. 6d.), one was fined 5s. (without costs), twelve were fined 2s. 6d., three were fined 1s., and one was ordered to come up for sentence when called upon.

During the last three months of the year operations have been carried out under "The School Attendance Act, 1894," a measure passed at last session of Parliament superseding most of the compulsory attendance enactments previously in force, and substituting for them clauses in some respects of a more exacting character. With the alterations introduced by the new measure the Board is, on the whole, in thorough accord. The greater stringency which it imposes in respect of the minimum number of attendances should have a very salutary effect on careless and culpably indulgent parents, while the fixing of a weekly instead of a monthly minimum number of attendances is a change that will simplify very greatly the practical working of the Act. In this district delinquents are now dealt with every month, under the previous Acts prosecutions could be carried out only every three months, thus causing serious loss of time, and in many cases rendering the proceedings utterly futile.

The Board's experience of the new Act is such as to justify the opinion that, though it yet possesses a slight but important defect, it is on the whole a sound and practical measure, and one that, if administered with wisdom and moderation, will prove efficacious in securing the fairly regular attendance even of those children whose progress in the paths of learning is sorely retarded by unfortunate home circumstances. The defect alluded to lies in the omission to cast upon the parent or guardian of the irregular attender the onus of proving that the child is sick. A provision to this effect has been in operation since 1885, and it is clear that the Legislature in framing the present Act intended to maintain this provision intact. A certain looseness that has crept into the wording of clause 7 has, however, had the effect of defeating this intention. In cases of irregular attenders brought under this clause before the Court at Dunedin, the Stipendiary Magistrate has ruled that the Act is on this point decidedly weak, and has, before giving judgment against the parents, demanded positive evidence of the children's physical fitness to attend school. Whilst calling the Minister's attention to this flaw, the Board expresses the hope that he will take early steps to have it remedied.