

of one scholar, who omitted Euclid, all the pupils have taken a full course of seven subjects, in each of which the majority secured good marks, although the amount attempted by two pupils in Latin, and all but four in Euclid and algebra, was that of a two years' course. Both in amount and preparation the work done is especially commendable in Euclid, algebra, Latin, and English.

A. J. MORTON, Inspector.

NORTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 9th March, 1898.

I have the honour to present the following report of the proceedings of the Education Board of the District of North Canterbury for the year ending the 31st December, 1897 :—

THE BOARD.—The three members who retired by rotation at the end of March were the Hon. Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Munnings, and Mr. Rennie. At a meeting on the 17th March the Board presented the Hon. Mr. Montgomery, who did not offer himself for re-election, with an address expressing its sincere regret at the loss sustained by his retirement from a position so long and so ably filled, as well as its high appreciation of the very valuable services rendered by him in the cause of education. Mr. Rennie, Mr. D. Buddo, and Mr. Munnings were returned to fill the three ordinary vacancies. On the 30th June, Mr. C. A. C. Hardy was elected to fill the extraordinary vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. Sawle, which took place towards the end of April. During 1897 the Board held seventeen ordinary meetings and one special meeting, whilst the Buildings Committee met nineteen times, including one special meeting, the Appointments Committee forty-two times, and the Normal School Committee nine times; making in all eighty-eight meetings for the year.

THE BOARD'S REPRESENTATIVES.—At a meeting on the 24th February Mr. A. Orr and Mr. D. Williamson were re-elected as members of the Ashburton High School Board, and Mr. A. I. McGregor and Mr. W. Harrison were subsequently appointed members of the Akaroa and Rangiora High School Boards respectively. Mr. H. R. Webb continued to represent the Board as Commissioner of Education Reserves.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS.—At the commencement of the year the localities lying around Overdale and Rabbit Island were formed into separate school districts; and in August a new school district was established at Highbank, where the Government had previously set apart a school site. In December the formation of a new district for the Springston South locality was resolved upon. The number of school districts at the end of the year was 174; but in three of these—viz., Charteris Bay, Gebbie's Valley, and Pendarves—school work continued to remain in suspension.

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL BUILDINGS.—During the year new schools were built at Allenton, Highbank, and Springston South, and additions made to the schools at Mayfield, Porter's Pass, and Hampstead, and to teachers' houses at Spreydon, Hampstead, and Tai Tapu. The number of schools in operation at the close of the year, including the practising department at the Normal School, was 200, of which sixteen were aided schools. Schools of the latter type were opened at Awaroa, Ellesmere, Happy Valley, and Okuku, but in September the one at Happy Valley was closed owing to insufficient support. In March the school at Lismore, which had been closed for several weeks, was re-opened as an aided school, and in November a similar course was decided upon with regard to the school at Port Levy, where the number of children attending was also not sufficient to warrant the Board in employing a teacher at the minimum salary fixed by the regulations. During 1897 a very heavy outlay was caused in connection with the re-roofing, painting, or repairing of school buildings at Glentunnel, Eyreton, St. Albans, Amberley, Kyle, Little Akaloa (main), Christchurch West, Sydenham, Papanui, Rakaia, Little Dunsandel, Southbridge, Mandeville Plains, Kowai Pass, Richmond, Riccarton, Yaldhurst, Belfast (main), Elgin, Southbrook, Wakanui (main), and Cust; whilst on many others where the need of repairs demanded the Board's prompt attention, amounts varying from a few pounds and upwards were expended. Towards the close of the year a new school at Hinds, teachers' houses at Burwood and Waltham, and addition to house at Dromore, were in course of erection, and a large number of works authorised, including additions to schools at New Brighton and Mackenzie, and extensive improvements at Rangiora. The need of houses in a number of country districts is badly felt, and in this direction alone, if due regard for the comfort and well-being of its teachers is to be shown, the Board is bound to incur a large expenditure in the immediate future. The total expenditure on buildings in 1897 was £7,857 17s. 11d.

MAINTENANCE.—The expenditure on teachers' salaries and allowances during the year reached £55,736 4s. 3d., and the grants to School Committees with other incidental expenses, £7,032 13s. 11d., making a total of £62,768 18s. 2d. The working average for the year was 17,893, but the average for the four quarters, commencing with the December quarter of 1896, on which payments were actually made, was 17,950. The cost per head of teachers' salaries was therefore £3 2s. 1½d., and the total cost of maintenance, including all incidental expenditure, exactly £3 9s. 11½d. per head.

The following table shows the expenditure in salaries and incidentals for each year from 1878, inclusive [not all reprinted] :—

Year.	Salaries.			Incidentals.			Totals.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1878	31,919	0	0	6,276	6	9	38,195	6	9
1888	50,749	14	6	6,400	7	5	57,150	6	3
1896	55,411	8	8	7,033	11	0	62,444	19	8
1897	55,736	4	3	7,032	13	11	62,768	18	2