

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The annual scholarship examinations were held at Otaki, Masterton, Pahiataua, and Wellington: 212 candidates presented themselves—133 in Class A, 23 in Class B, 25 in class C, and 31 in Class D.

INSPECTION.—The annual report of the Inspectors draws attention to the small increase (17) in the number presented for examination as against the number examined in the previous year. Reference is also made to the falling-off in the preparatory classes, and the decrease in Standards III. and IV.—in all 316. Increases in the other standards total 333. For the last three years the numbers presented for examination are practically unchanged. Of the 140 schools examined, 96 are considered satisfactory, 31 only fair, and 13 inferior. Changes of teachers and other unfavourable conditions have affected the latter schools, and it does not necessarily follow that they are now under incompetent teachers. The pass-work in spelling and arithmetic is considered good. Attention is drawn to the urgent need for reform in the syllabus, and dealing exceptionally with teachers in charge of small schools.

Apparently a large number of parents fail to appreciate their children's educational opportunities, for no less than 2,600 children are daily absent from school. It is to be feared that the indifference of parents, rather than the fault of the children, accounts for this irregularity. The Board has issued circulars pointing out the duties of Committees and teachers in this matter. Notices under the School Attendance Act have also, in some instances, been issued; but the question has been allowed to rest there, which is much to be regretted.

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL.—Early in the year a district high school was established at Masterton. Twenty-eight pupils attended in March quarter, 35 in June, 44 in September, and 49 in December. The subjects taken are English, history, geography, science, arithmetic, algebra, and Euclid. At first the classes were carried on by Mr. A. N. Burns, B.A. In September Mr. E. T. Norris, M.A., was appointed, and later on Miss M. K. Wilson, B.A.*

DRILL.—Classes for the instruction of teachers have been carried on under Mr. Polson and Mr. Dovey. Teachers have attended during the year, many coming considerable distances by train and travelling under special tickets, the cost of which is borne by the Education Department.

This subject is fully dealt with in the Inspectors' report. They say: "When Sergeant-Major McDonald was in charge of the drill of the district, the Board issued a small manual of preparatory and physical drill (without apparatus), and this is still used by many teachers. Others take exercises with clubs, poles, or dumb-bells, as well as free physical exercises; but to enable teachers to have a clearer idea of what the Act requires the Department should issue, as a guide, a model course in physical training, setting forth a minimum such as can be satisfied even in small schools. This can be supplemented by further and more varied physical training, including, where possible, systematic instruction in swimming, cricket, or other games. Leaving out the small aided schools in Grade 0, we find that physical drill is taught in 115 schools, in about fifty of which the programme is satisfactory. To give the teachers an opportunity of becoming more efficient, the Board decided to hold a class for female teachers on Saturday mornings. The credit of the organization of the military drill of the district is due to Sergeant-Major McDonald, whose valuable services were required by the Government elsewhere. The Education Department has now taken on the work for the whole colony. During the year 11 cadet corps, each with a total of not less than 48 of all ranks, representing 9 schools, and 12 detachments, each with a total of not less than 24 of all ranks, from 12 schools, were recognised by the Department. The total number of cadets of all ranks for the whole district was 1,013."

TECHNICAL.—In his report of the work done by the Technical School during the year, the Director deals exhaustively with this subject, giving in detail the work of the separate classes. The new Board, substituted under the Manual and Technical Instruction Act, has terminated the direct control of technical education by the Education Board.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

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F. BRADEY, Chairman.

* Details of the work, attendance, &c., at the school are given in a separate paper.