

TABLE I.—SUMMARY OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS' ACCOUNT—*continued*.

Provincial Districts.	Assets and Liabilities, 31st December, 1903.					
	Balances of Accounts.	Arrears of Rent and Interest due.	Total Assets.	Amounts due to Capital Account.	Other Liabilities.	Balance of Assets.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Auckland ..	1,498 6 4	1,293 6 0	2,791 12 4	1,210 5 0	27 12 0	1,553 15 4
Taranaki ..	322 5 3	617 11 8	939 16 11	197 3 10	13 7 11	729 5 2
Wellington ..	569 13 3	86 19 10	656 13 1	97 13 3	..	558 19 10
Hawke's Bay ..	2,355 16 7	423 3 5	2,779 0 0	506 6 0	20 5 10	2,252 8 2
Marlborough ..	72 10 0	166 19 6	239 9 6	239 9 6
Nelson ..	47 6 9	431 19 5	479 6 2	479 6 2
Westland ..	108 15 2	21 5 0	130 0 2	130 0 2
Canterbury ..	2,385 11 8	1,711 13 11	4,097 5 7	264 5 11	45 0 0	3,787 19 8
Otago ..	43,573 13 1	4,757 2 0	48,330 15 1	..	3,643 10 2	44,687 4 11
Totals for 1903..	50,933 18 1	9,510 0 9	60,443 18 10	2,275 14 0	3,749 15 11	54,418 8 11
Totals for 1902..	48,210 13 3	11,029 9 3	59,240 2 6	1,486 6 11	4,126 5 7	53,627 10 0

The payments made to Education Boards for primary education out of the proceeds from education reserves in 1903 amounted to £44,762 15s. 11d. The revenues of the Boards are not, however, increased thereby, as equal amounts are deducted from the grants payable by the Government to the Boards. The payments for primary education were distributed amongst the several Education Boards as follows: Auckland, £2,934 7s. 6d.; Taranaki, £2,118 17s. 6d.; Wanganui, £2,374 0s. 9d.; Wellington, £2,757 1s. 9d.; Hawke's Bay, £3,100 12s. 6d.; Marlborough, £300; Nelson, £635 4s.; Grey, £88; North Canterbury, £14,182 2s. 3d.; South Canterbury, £3,344 13s. 9d.; Otago, £9,090 19s. 10d.; Southland, £3,836 16s. 1d. The payments for secondary education from reserves under the control of the School Commissioners amounted to £3,320 1s. 4d. Under "The Secondary Schools Act, 1903," the revenues derived from reserves set apart for secondary education are to be "handed over by the Commissioners to the governing bodies of secondary schools in the provincial district in proportion to the number of pupils in average attendance at the several secondary schools, exclusive of the pupils in any preparatory department."

NATIVE SCHOOLS.

The number of Maori village schools in full operation at the end of 1903 was 101, two more than the number open at the end of 1902. The number of children on the rolls of these schools at the 31st December, 1903, was 3,693, as against 3,742 at the end of the preceding year. This falling-off is doubtless due in the main to epidemics of measles, whooping-cough, and scarlet fever that have occurred in various localities in the North. The average attendance, nevertheless, has been fully maintained, being 3,012, as against 3,005 in 1902. In addition to the village schools, there are the four mission schools and the five boarding or secondary schools that are examined and inspected by the Department at the request of their controlling authorities. These bring the total number of Native schools to 110.

The Inspector's report (E.-2) shows that on the whole the standard of efficiency of the schools is satisfactory. This is encouraging, in view of the fact that of late years there has been a gradual increase in the standard requirements. Handwork is now fairly well established in most of the schools. Maoris take very readily to all forms of manual work, and their skill in carpentry and modelling is in many instances surprising. At several of the schools there are carpenter's shops in full operation. The boys are taught to make articles that are likely to prove useful to their parents, who may purchase such things as stools, tables, boxes, &c., at the cost-price of the material. The elder Maoris appreciate these workshops very highly, and in one case have voluntarily supplied the timber for the building.

Native schools being established only upon the application of the Maoris directly concerned, it is satisfactory to observe that this year marks an advance into Taranaki, a district in which these schools have hitherto had no place. The new school at Puniho, near Parihaka, has so far been successful, the people taking a praiseworthy interest in it. A side school at Lower Waihou, Hokianga, in connection with the Whakarapa School, was opened experimentally in a building lent by the Natives, but owing to unsatisfactory circumstances was closed