

**NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.**—There were at the beginning of 1905 152 schools under the control of the Board. In the course of the year there were established new schools at Momona, Akitio, Whatarangi, Waiohine, and Korora, while schools were closed at Wai-o-waka, Ngakonui, and Waingawa, so that at the end of the year 154 schools remained in operation.

**ATTENDANCE.**—The average attendances for the respective quarters were: March, 14,106; June, 14,038; September, 13,942; December, 14,198. The average for the year was 14,071. The average roll was 16,235. Included in the numbers were 196 Maoris and 109 half-castes in attendance at Board schools. The percentage of attendance was 86·7, which, compared with 84·7 in 1904 and 82·6 in 1903, shows an improvement of 4 per cent. in two years. Further, while the average number of pupils on the roll was 739 greater than two years ago, the average attendance was 1,270 greater. The periodic reports on irregular pupils required of teachers have, by directing attention to such pupils, enabled the Truant Officers to work more effectively. A very large number of our schools now show an excellent attendance, and it is a well-observed fact that, with very few exceptions and these all capable of easy explanation, the best conducted schools are marked by a high average of attendance. In the course of the year another of the local Truant Officers resigned, and the Board decided that the attendance conditions of the town schools had so greatly improved as to justify the Board in placing the whole district under one officer. The following is a summary of the work of the Truant Officers: Visits to schools, 476—373 city and suburban, 42 West Coast, 61 Wairarapa, and 39 to Catholic schools. Total cases of irregular attendance dealt with by Chief Truant Officer, 3,636; by country officers, 933: total, 4,569. Proceedings were taken in 189 cases, in 142 of which convictions were recorded—133 with fines and costs, 9 without fines. Twelve cases were dismissed, 24 withdrawn owing to improved attendance, and 20 discontinued owing to removal of parents from locality or district. The fines collected amounted to £22 12s. 6d. Some of the worst truants were neglected children, and of this class 16 boys and 6 girls from seven to fourteen years of age were, at the instance of the police, committed to industrial schools. The Truant Officer in the course of the year sent to various schools 19 children of school-age who were previously not in attendance at any school. Grateful acknowledgment is made of the courteous assistance rendered to the Truant Officer by the Bench, by the police, by the officers of the Labour Department, and by teachers and Committees. The practice of employing children of school age during school hours in the capacity of messengers and on tradesmen's delivery carts has, as a result of the attention given to it, been much reduced. To the Catholic schools the same attention has been given as to our own schools, as it is noticed that any difference in treatment results in a drift from the Board to the Catholic schools, or *vice versa*.

**TEACHING STAFF.**—At the close of the year there were in the service of the Board 135 male and 188 female teachers, 9 male and 85 female pupil-teachers: total, 144 males, 273 females, or 417 in all. The corresponding numbers for 1904 were 130 males, 264 females, or 397 in all, so that the proportion of males has slightly increased; and it is hoped that the better salaries offered under the scale of 1905 may induce a larger number of promising boys to enter the profession. The enactments of 1905, providing for a retiring-allowance and for an improved rate of payment of teachers, have met with very general approval.

**TRAINING OF TEACHERS.**—A large number of teachers again availed themselves of the instruction in manual and technical subjects offered at the Wellington and Masterton classes conducted by teachers of the Technical School, and at the Pahiatua District High School class conducted by Mr. G. A. Jones and Misses Petrie and McCaul. At Wellington between eighty and a hundred teachers attended, and the subjects were arranged to suit both those preparing for examinations and those giving instruction in drawing subjects in schools. The course included model and memory drawing, drawing plant forms and small designs, and brushwork, including drawing from nature. The progress is reported as satisfactory on the whole, the students in many instances evincing considerable enthusiasm. Mr. Foster again conducted with success a pupil-teachers' science class. The attempt to start a class for instruction in woodwork resulted in failure, owing to the small number who attended. A Saturday class for instruction of lady teachers in cookery, conducted at the Terrace School by the Wellington instructor, was attended by over twenty teachers, and a number of others expressed a desire to attend. Physical training classes for lady teachers were held at Wellington and Masterton, the Board paying for the instruction; but the Department's grant for instruction of men in military drill was withdrawn, owing to the unsatisfactory attendance. The Board is well pleased to note the considerable number of teachers who have been steadily endeavouring to improve their educational status on University lines. A few cases have, however, come under notice wherein a quite immoderate amount of such work has been undertaken, to the detriment of health and efficiency. Such teachers will do well to remember that the proper discharge of their duties as teachers and the welfare of their pupils should be their first and last care.

**TRAINING COLLEGE.**—The Board records with much satisfaction that the establishment of a Training College for the Middle University District has been sanctioned; that a grant has been made for the necessary additions to the Thorndon School, that plans have been drawn and approved, and that at the time of writing the work is well under way. Applications were invited throughout Australia and New Zealand for the position of Principal, the Board having decided that the appointee should have an intimate knowledge of colonial conditions. For the position of Kindergarten Mistress applications were invited in Great Britain as well, as the Board considered that the appointee should have wide knowledge of recent developments in kindergarten. The position of Principal was conferred on Mr. William Gray, M.A., B.Sc., Chief Inspector of Schools in the Wanganui Education District; and, on the advice of Professor Sadler, that of Kindergarten Mistress on Miss Dorothy Fitch, of the Home and Colonial Institute, London. The remaining members of the staff have been appointed since the end of the year. The institution thus established will, the Board trusts, become, by wise management, a potent factor in promoting educational efficiency and raising educational ideals throughout the colony. I may add that while students are received from all parts of the Middle University District, the cost of administra-