

PALMERSTON NORTH HIGH SCHOOL.

Staff.

Mr. J. E. Vernon, M.A., B.Sc. ; Mr. F. Foote, B.A., B.Sc. ; Mr. J. Murray, M.A. ; Miss C. B. Mills, M.A., B.Sc. ; Miss M. Ronaldson, B.A., B.Sc. ; Mr. O. Reischer ; Miss Fergus ; Mr. C. J. Gill ; Mr. G. H. Elliott.

I. REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS.

As it has been customary at the annual meeting of the Board for the Chairman to report on the work done during the year, I now crave your indulgence while a brief retrospect of the past year's work is given.

With respect to the High School, it is highly satisfactory to find that the number on the roll continues to increase. The year 1908 closed with a roll-number of 140 ; the school reopened in February, 1909, with a roll-number of 170, closing with 158. A satisfactory commencement has been made for the present year, the roll-number to-day being no less than 181—up till now the high-water mark of the school.

The excellence of the work done by the Rector and his staff still continues, as is proved over and over again not only by the splendid educational results, but also by the principles inculcated—a combination which cannot but result in the greatest good for the girls and boys who are fortunate enough to pass an important period of their life at the school. The examination results are as follows : Passed Junior Scholarship Examination with credit, 2 ; Matriculation, 10 ; Junior Civil Service, 6 ; Senior Free Place Examination, 17 ; gained Wanganui Education Board's Scholarship, 2.

The number of pupils who are remaining for more than one or two years continues to increase, and doubtless this is due to the recognition by the parents of the benefits derived by their children at the High School. There is, however, room for still further improvement in this direction.

The teaching staff has altered in respect of Miss Mills, whose place has been filled by Miss Lynch a former member of the staff. The position formerly occupied by Mr. Reischer, who has left the Dominion, has been filled by Mr. Anderson, and an additional lady teacher, Miss Arnott, has been appointed.

The most important change in the school-work has been the carrying into effect of the Rector's proposal to have separate class-rooms for girls and boys in the lower forms. As the roll increases it is to be hoped that this change will be carried into effect throughout the school.

The boardinghouse erected by Mr. Vernon (under agreement with the Board) has been opened, and has proved a valuable adjunct of the school, the average number of boarders being fifteen. The Board should not lose sight of the fact that by Mr. Vernon's efforts in this direction its revenue has been increased by about £150 per annum.

After the old woodwork-room was vacated by the technical classes, alterations were effected, converting this room into a gymnasium. Although the equipment of the gymnasium has yet to be obtained, the accommodation has been found most useful and beneficial : at the least, the boys have some place of shelter in the wet weather.

The old art-room has been converted into a science-room, and the room formerly used for science purposes has been converted into a class-room. During the vacation the quadrangle has been renovated, and now presents a creditable appearance.

The new sewerage system has been completed at a cost of £200, a special grant being made by the Government for this work. All the alterations and improvements have given good results.

The grounds are at present in very fine order, but I can see no alternative to redraining the football-ground. Time has decidedly proved that the original pipe drains were laid at too great a depth, and accordingly have not given the best results.

Finance.

From the balance-sheet you will see that the finances of the High School are thoroughly sound, and there need be no apprehension of any shortage during the coming year either for salaries or maintenance.

The position of the High School Account at the end of the financial year showed a balance of £102 9s. 2d. in the bank, and capitations on last year's work amount to £151 2s. 6d. to be received from the Education Department. This gratifying position is mainly due, in my opinion, to the wise provisions made by the Education Department by which adequate funds are now provided for unendowed secondary schools such as the one now under our control.

Technical School.

During the last year the new Technical School buildings have been completed, and the classes removed from their various habitations to the new buildings. The total cost of the Technical School site, buildings, and fittings has up to date been £7,755, and of this amount £5,598 was provided by special Government grants. The classes are increasing both in numbers and attendance. Care should be taken that technical work proper be not put to one side for the more easily controlled and, from a financial point of view, more profitable continuation classes, however desirable and necessary these may be.