

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—The number of district high schools in operation at the end of the year was nine. The Hamilton West District High School was disestablished on the opening of a high school at Hamilton. Serious difficulty is often experienced in obtaining the services of assistants qualified to teach agriculture and other science subjects in the secondary departments of district high schools.

FREE CLASS-BOOKS.—Arrangements have been made for the supply of free class-books to all pupils. The grant for the current year is based on the roll-number at the end of the December quarter, 1911. As the roll-number of scholars in this district is rapidly increasing, it is probable that the grant will be found to be insufficient to meet requirements, and that representations will have to be made to the Department on this matter.

PHYSICAL AND MILITARY DRILL.—Due attention has been given to the requirements of the Act in the instruction of pupils in physical and military drill.

MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.—During the year steady progress was made in manual training and technical instruction. Technical classes were carried on in Auckland City as in previous years, in temporary buildings, on account of the Seddon Memorial Technical College not having yet been completed. This building should have been finished in November, 1910, but, owing to unforeseen difficulties, it is not yet ready for occupation. The number of individual students in attendance at technical classes in Auckland City last year was 1,348.

Manual-training schools were opened during the year at Hamilton and Cambridge, and others will be opened shortly at Devonport, Pukekohe, Helensville, and Waihi.

The awarding of special prizes to schools making a special feature of school-gardens has given a considerable impetus to the teaching of nature-study and elementary agriculture in the primary schools, the number of classes recognized in this subject for last year being 140, as against seventy-three in 1910. Handwork was taught in 197 public schools, and swimming in twelve.

In schools below Grade IV, taught by a male teacher, seventy-five were recognized for needle-work.

OFFICES.—The Board has removed its offices from the Victoria Arcade to more commodious premises in Williamson's Chambers, Shortland Street. The Educational Institute has rented two rooms adjoining the offices for club-room purposes.

CHILDREN'S TEETH.—Permission was granted to the Dental Association to examine and report upon the teeth of school children, subject to suitable arrangements being made with the Committees and head teachers of the schools concerned.

ENDOWMENT.—In 1910 the Board brought before the Appeal Court its claim to the rents of the old Supreme Court site endowment. The Court held that the revenue from that reserve should be used for general educational purposes within the Auckland Provincial District. At a conference of educational bodies, convened by the Board, the question of utilizing that reserve was taken into consideration; and recommendations were unanimously adopted that provision should be made for the revenue to be expended on—(a) fostering of agricultural education, (b) purchase of sites for other than primary schools, (c) providing suitable boarding accommodation for secondary-school pupils in Auckland, (d) University College purposes, (e) and the making of better provision for secondary education at Hamilton, Thames, Whangarei, and other main country centres.

INSPECTORS.—Messrs. N. T. Lambourne, M.A., and J. W. McIlraith, M.A., LL.B., Litt.D., were appointed Inspectors of Schools, and Mr. R. D. Stewart retired during the year. It was found necessary to appoint an additional Inspector, in view of the largely increased number of schools. Mr. M. Priestley, Organizing Inspector, has been given the status of an Inspector of Schools.

RETIREMENT OF THE HON. G. FOWLDS.—The Board placed on record its high appreciation of the services rendered to the cause of education by the Hon. G. Fowlds during his office as Minister of Education, and expressed its regret at his retirement.

The Board again desires to thank the Education Department for the careful consideration of its recommendations. Valuable assistance has been received from School Committees in the administration of educational matters during the year.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE J. GARLAND, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

TARANAKI.

SIR,—

Education Office, New Plymouth, 21st March, 1912.

In accordance with the provisions of section 174 of the Education Act, 1908, the Education Board of the District of Taranaki has the honour to submit the following report of its proceedings for the year 1911 :—

At the beginning of the year the Board was comprised of the following members: Mr. James Wade (Chairman), Messrs. G. A. Adlam, W. C. Cargill, A. H. Halcombe, W. L. Kennedy, Arthur Morton, William Rogers, Harold Trimble, and James Young. In terms of the Education Act, 1908, the following members retired: North Ward—A. H. Halcombe; East Ward—William Rogers; West Ward—James Wade; and at the election held on the fourth Monday in July, Messrs. Halcombe and Rogers were re-elected for their respective wards. Mr. Wade having declined to offer himself for re-election, the Rev. John McArthur was elected member for the West Ward.