

in the Poerua School building. During the year a new school (Grade I) was opened at Ryder's Mill, the Taramakau School (Grade 0) was reopened, and the Orwell Creek and Twelve-mile (Grade 0) Schools were temporarily closed.

Attendance.—For the year the average attendance was 1,750, out of a roll number of 1,968, as against 1,695 and 1,934 respectively, the corresponding figures for the previous year. The percentage of attendance was 88·6, as against 87·1 in 1911.

Teachers.—At the 31st December fifty-seven adult teachers, seven pupil-teachers, and three probationers were in the employ of the Board. Of the adult teachers, nine males and fifteen females are certificated, no males and four females hold licenses, and three males and twenty-six females are uncertificated. Among the last division many of the teachers possess considerable teaching experience, and have passed Partial D, Matriculation, or Civil Service Junior Examinations.

Staff Changes.—In September Mr. E. A. Scott, who for seven years had been Inspector of Schools and Director of Technical Education for the Grey Education District, and who prior to these appointments had been the certificated teacher longest in the Board's employ, was compelled through ill health to retire on superannuation. His resignation was received with much regret by the Board. Applications were invited for the vacant positions, and resulted in the appointment of Mr. William S. Austin, formerly a valued teacher in the Board's service, and at the time of his appointment rector of the Reefton District High School.

Scholarships, Seddon Medals, &c.—At the December examinations thirty-six candidates sat for Scholarship, Free Place, and Seddon Memorial Medals. Of these, eight candidates qualified; Miss Emily Stephens, a pupil of the Greymouth District High School, obtained the highest number of marks (534), and was awarded by the Board the Junior National Scholarship for the Grey Education District. It appears, however, that, being a resident of Kumara, in the Westland District, the scholarship cannot be retained by her. Board Junior Scholarships have been awarded to John Coates (523), Kathleen Waterhouse (523), Edward Malloch (515), Margaret Bush (429), William Smith (417), and Florence Smith (408). The country scholarship for schools under thirty-five in average attendance was won by George Woods, of the Swede's Mill School. The Seddon Memorial Medals were awarded to Kathleen Waterhouse and Edward Malloch, pupils of the Cobden School and Grey District High School respectively. The Junior National Scholarship held by Master John Cairney (a pupil of the Grey District High School) has been extended for another year. When only eleven years two months old he won the Junior National Scholarship, being then a Fifth Standard pupil. While holding the scholarship he has twice passed the Civil Service Junior Examination, obtaining third and thirteenth place respectively for the Dominion, and last year (age fourteen years two months) he matriculated with Solicitor's General Knowledge.

Manual and Technical.—During 1912, school classes were held as follows: Handwork at Greymouth, Cobden, and Blackball; agriculture at Dobson, Blackball, Poerua Settlement, and Moana; cookery (at the Technical School) by pupils of Greymouth, Runanga, and Cobden; physical measurements (primary and secondary) at Grey District High School and at Cobden School. Special classes were held in connexion with cookery (Greymouth Convent), engineering, mechanical drawing, and wool-classing, and a continuation class was conducted at Blackball. The Saturday classes for teachers were well attended, the subjects taken being brush drawing and carton work. During the present year the Board is making strong and persistent efforts to establish manual and technical special classes in every centre of its education district, and it is confidently expected that good results will shortly be apparent.

Physical Instruction.—In all the schools manual and breathing exercises and physical drill is receiving due attention. Cadet matters and the boy-scout and girls' peace-scout movements have also been encouraged. At the last competition the Dominion Championship Belt was won by Private James White, of the Cobden School Junior Cadets.

Building.—In December the Inspector-General of Schools visited Greymouth in connexion with the Board's application for a grant for a new district-high-school building. As a result, a conditional grant has been authorized by the Government, and in many ways the Board has directly and indirectly benefited from the wide knowledge and experience of Mr. Hogben.

Education Commission and Local Bodies' Conference.—Although now subjects of history, these institutions have produced much good, and the results of their labours will long beneficially affect the educational work of the Dominion.

Finance.—The year opened with a credit balance on all accounts of £194 7s. 3d., and closed with a credit balance of £356 3s. 4d.

General.—As on former occasions, I have again to express the thanks of the Board and its officers to yourself and the officers of your Department for numerous courtesies extended.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

H. J. BIGNELL, Chairman.

NORTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Christchurch, 26th April, 1913.

I have the honour to present the following report of the proceedings of the Education Board of the District of North Canterbury for the year ending the 31st December, 1912:—

The Board.—The members whose term of office expired under the provisions of the Act were Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Langford, representing the North, South, and Central Wards respectively. At an election held on the 22nd July, Mr. W. A. Banks, Mr. J. Studholme, and Mr. E. H. Andrews were elected for the North, South, and Central Wards respectively. At the Board's annual meeting, held on the 24th August, Mr. H. Boyd was elected Chairman of the Board and *ex*