

There are three separate class-rooms, in which the masters begin each day's work with religious instruction, reading of the Bible, and prayer.

*Lyttelton High School.*

THE school is conducted by two masters, namely, a rector and a second teacher. The hours of attendance are from 9 to 12 and from 1 to 4. Saturday is a holiday. Six weeks' holidays are allowed at Midsummer and two weeks at Mid-winter. All fees are paid in advance. The school is managed by a Board of Directors, chosen annually by the Managers of St. John's Church, who are themselves elected by the congregation. The directors receive the fees and Government grant, and pay all liabilities. The rector provides all books, subject to the approval of the directors, and sells them to the pupils. The course of study embraces English, French, Latin, Drawing, Mathematics, and Music. In English and English History, Nelson's series are in use. In Geography, Anderson's Senior and Junior Geography, and Young's Child's Geography. The other books in use are, Lennie's Grammar, Young's Child's Grammar, Word Expositor, the Young Composer, the Complete System of Practical Arithmetic (Scottish School Book Association), Second Book of ditto, First Lessons in ditto, Colenso's Algebra, Part 1, Pott's Euclid, Eton Grammar and Delectus, Bryce's First and Second Latin Reader, Virgil, Livy, Horace, Hall's First French Course, Fivas' Grammar, Charles XII., and McLean's Book-keeping.

With regard to the provision contemplated for future instruction in the higher branches of education, in the Twenty-fourth Session of the Provincial Council the following resolutions were passed:—

1. "That in the opinion of this Council it is expedient that provision should be made for the future establishment of a school in this Province for the education of youth in Classics, Mathematics, and the higher branches of General Literature.

"2. That with a view of creating an endowment for the support of such school, when established, and for the foundation of scholarships, the Superintendent be authorized to make a reserve or reserves of waste lands, not exceeding in the aggregate 9,000 acres of rural land and 40 acres of town land, provided that no more than 2,000 acres of rural land shall be reserved within any block of ten miles square, or more than 5 acres of town land in any one town, and also a reserve not exceeding 400 acres of rural land as a site for a school."

These were the two first of a series of resolutions proposed by the Chairman of the Board of Education. The remainder were not taken into consideration at the time, partly from the pressure of other business and partly with a view of allowing time for the thorough ventilation of the subject. They dealt principally with the constitution and functions of the governing body. The idea, as explained by the Chairman of the Board to the Council, was that, supposing the land to be judiciously selected, it would bring in a rental on an average of 5s. per acre, and that accordingly the 9,000 acres would produce a gross return of about £2,250. Supposing the net return on this sum to be £2,000, it was proposed to expend it as follows:—

1st. To appropriate £600 as the salary of the head-master, besides payments from boarders.

2nd. To devote the whole of the balance, or about £1,400, to the maintenance of scholarships.

These scholarships were to be of such value as to enable the holders to defray every possible charge incident to their attendance at school. Thus, their parents were to be relieved of all expense in their education. Another proposal was, that the scholarships should be tenable for a period sufficiently long to enable the holders to complete an education of the best kind before that period expired. The main object of these two proposals, taken together, was to remove, as much as possible, every obstacle to the cultivation and development of the minds of those boys which might be worth cultivating and developing, without regard to the pecuniary circumstances of the parents. It was intended that the State should, as it were, adopt the boys who gave proofs of ability, and that poverty should not be the cause of great natural parts being neglected or wasted. This may be looked upon as the distinctive feature in the scheme, and that in which it differs from most of the existing foundations for similar purposes. Scholarships, as a rule, are only open to boys who have been some years at school, and who, therefore, come to the competition with the advantage of a comparatively long previous training. Of course this previous training to qualify a candidate for such a scholarship must have been to a certain extent a costly one, and thus, in order to compete with any chance of success, a boy must be the son of parents possessed of a certain amount of wealth. Thus, under this system, sons of poor parents are, in practice, absolutely shut out from a competition, whatever their talents and abilities may be. It is proposed, in the case of these scholarships, that they shall be open only to boys of an age when natural abilities, independently of a higher or lower standard of education, tell most. Boys, say, of eleven years old, whether educated at an ordinary district school or at one of greater pretensions, will as a rule be found pretty much upon a par as to their attainments, and capable of passing an examination on the same subjects on pretty nearly equal terms. On the other hand, at a more advanced age, the previous training, and not the natural abilities, will, as a general rule, turn the scale. Another evil in the prevalent system is, that it tempts masters to force on a few promising boys, with the view of qualifying them for a scholarship, and this undue attention to a small part of the school (in fact to that part which requires the least care) results in the neglect of those children who require the help of the master most. Thus the general objects of the proposals are:—1. To make the scholarships a means of cultivating and developing talent wherever it may exist. 2. To offer an inducement to masters to attend principally to the thorough grounding of the children at an early age, and not to confine themselves to the easier and more tempting task of instructing those who have already shown their aptness to learn. It is proposed, then, that the scholarships shall be of the value of £100 each, and tenable for nine years. Supposing £1,400 available for scholarships, there would, of course, be fourteen scholars. From this sum the scholar would defray his board, lodging, clothing, tuition fees, and incidental expenses, such as travelling expenses, books, stationery, &c. It is proposed that none but boarders shall be admitted into the institution. The experience of great public schools in England seems to show that the mixture of boarders and those living outside at their own homes is objectionable on various grounds, and will be found set out at length in the Report of the Royal Commission on