

in this important matter. Now that the registers and forms of returns have been in use for more than a year, it is not unreasonable to expect that the teachers will prove themselves both willing and competent to furnish the required information with the utmost care and accuracy, and that the Secretaries of Boards will assist the department by carefully examining the school returns as they are received, and by referring back to Committees any of them which are manifestly inaccurate, or respecting which an explanation may be deemed necessary.

JOHN HISLOP.

(Circular No. 36.)

Education Department, Wellington,
25th August, 1879.

The Secretary to the Education Board, —.

IN connection with the distribution of the current vote for school buildings, I have the honor, by direction of the Minister of Education, to bring under the notice of Education Boards the desirableness of securing in all cases a proper degree of privacy for the boys' and girls' closets in the school grounds. It is within the knowledge of the department that in some districts the rule is to have separate playgrounds for the sexes, that the closets are so situated in the grounds that at least their doors are screened from observation, and that in many cases the plans leave nothing to be desired. But it is also known that the same attention to decency is not shown in other places, and that even unnecessarily costly structures have been provided without securing the requisite privacy. I am, therefore, to request Boards to be good enough to take such steps as they may consider best to secure that separate closets of a suitable description are provided for every school, that these are placed in proper positions, and that at least the doors are screened from public observation. It is suggested that suitable closet arrangements should form an essential part of the plans of all new schools; that in regard to existing school buildings the Inspector of Schools should be directed to point out what may be necessary in this respect; and that in the case of large schools suitable urinals should be provided if at all possible. I may further state that in all probability Boards will be asked to furnish in their next annual report information on the subject referred to, and to state the general principle on which the arrangements are made.

JOHN HISLOP.

(Circular No. 37.)

Education Department, Wellington,
17th September, 1879.

The Secretary to the Education Board, —.

I AM directed by the Minister of Education to inform you that you will be supplied with — copies each of parts 1 and 2 of a book of Elementary Linear Drawing copies, adapted for collective teaching in public schools, prepared by Mr. D. C. Hutton, of the Dunedin School of Art. These books are intended to be distributed among the schools in the following proportions, namely:—1 copy of each part to every school having — to 100 pupils; 2 copies to every school having 100 to 300 pupils; 3 copies to every school having 300 to 500 pupils; 4 copies to every school having 500 to 700 pupils. A second series of a more advanced character is in preparation.

E. O. GIBBES,
For the Secretary.

(Circular No. 44.)

Education Department, Wellington,
10th December, 1879.

The Secretary to the Education Board, —.

I HAVE the honor, by direction of the Minister of Education, to inform your Board that Government are desirous to obtain very full and accurate information respecting the present wants of the population in the several educational districts as regards school building accommodation.

With a view to facilitate the furnishing of this information by the Boards in a systematic manner, I am to ask that the three forms of return herewith enclosed may be filled up with the utmost possible care and correctness, and forwarded to this office not later than 20th January next.

Return No. 1.—This return is intended to include school buildings and works actually under contract, and not completed and paid for on 1st January, 1880. But it will also include any slight extras which may be wanted to render the buildings complete. You will be careful, however, to show the particulars of such extras and their cost in a separate line, as directed by the note to the return.

Return No. 2.—This return is intended for buildings and works not included in Return No. 1, and in respect of which the Board has not contracted any liability. You will be careful to enter first of all and to distinguish works in school districts already constituted, which are considered absolutely necessary to meet the present wants of the district. You will then enter and distinguish the school buildings and works considered necessary in school districts which the Board has resolved to constitute.

Return No. 3.—This return needs no explanation. It will be seen that the several heads of expenditure are to correspond with the totals in Returns 1 and 2, and that a heading is provided for such expenditure as cannot be charged against any particular school or schools.

It is believed that these returns, if properly made out, will show somewhat clearly the circumstances which appear to the Board to justify its estimated requirements in respect of school buildings. But as the estimate of requirements will, in a number of instances, be based upon an expectation of increased school attendance, you are requested to furnish, in the form of notes to the return, any statistical information which can be adduced in support of such expectation.

In the case of a proposed new school or new school district you will please furnish in a separate note particulars respecting the distance of the proposed site from the nearest existing school; the character of the population, whether settled or otherwise; and the number of children of school age who cannot attend at schools already in operation.

Your Board will please note that Return No. 2 is not to include *prospective* wants such as may hereafter arise from new settlements or other causes.

In estimating the cost of the works it is of the utmost importance to keep in mind that the greatest possible economy, compatible with efficiency, should be exercised in the expenditure of the moneys placed at the Board's disposal for school buildings.

The definition of the term "school buildings" is given in the last paragraph of Circular No. 15 of date 2nd November, 1878.

JOHN HISLOP.