

A statement of accounts is appended hereto, and is certified by the Provincial District Auditor. The Board has been enabled to adjust the accounts of the school for the past three years. The accounts are now kept separate and distinct from the ordinary Board Fund. The salaries of the teachers were subjected to the same scale of reduction as that applied to teachers in the primary schools, consequent upon the retrenchment made by the General Assembly in the Education Vote. The scale of fees has been altered to a uniform charge of £2 2s. per quarter for each pupil. Free tuition is given to holders of scholarships established under the Education Act, and to girls from the district schools who obtain certificates of proficiency at the examination for such scholarships.

The Board is indebted to Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G., for the presentation of a special prize, which was competed for at the last annual examination of the school.

Adopted by the Board at its meeting, 11th March, 1881.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

J. M. CLARK, Chairman.

HEAD MASTER'S GENERAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1880.

THE scholastic year was divided into four terms; the first beginning on February 3rd, and ending March 19th; the second April 1st, and ending on July 2nd; the third July 19th, and ending September 28th; the fourth October 6th, and ending December 17th.

Of the pupils who were present at the close of 1879, 182 returned to pursue their studies. This number was very much larger than I had anticipated. However, several parents found it would be wise to give their daughters another year's training, and hence the large number returning.

As usual, I had to enrol a much larger number of new pupils at the commencement of the year than at any other time. Fifty-six were entered on February 3rd, 15 on April 1st, 26 on July 19th, and 13 on October 6th, thus making an average terminal increase of 27.5.

ATTENDANCE.—The attendance has been fitful, especially from April to September. This was due partly to the continued inclemency of the weather and consequent prevalence of colds, but to a greater extent to the unwise demands made upon or by the children at home. Hitherto these demands had been confined, generally, to assisting the parents in household work, because of the absence or inefficiency of servants; but in 1880 a new element was introduced: dancing classes, and reunions of young people to show what they or their parents were learning, came on with alarming frequency. Exposure to the night (often morning) air laid many of them low with sickness, and prevented their attendance at school. The scholarship of the school suffered, and the tone of the girls was not improved by the dancing mania, whose return I look forward to with the deepest aversion.

ENGLISH.—The subject of English has received very careful attention during the year. Commencing in the first form with elementary analysis of sentences and easy parsing, we proceeded slowly but surely with the assistance of the best text-books, until in the sixth form the subject was treated very exhaustively. In my oral and written examinations of the various classes I have been much pleased with the good work that was being done. Composition, done without help and in the presence of the teachers, is an unerring means of ascertaining the amount of real benefit that has been derived from the study of the language. A majority of the girls have given in excellent essays, well thought out and clearly expressed. The second form has not shown up so well in the averages, neither has the middle fourth. In the former case, this was due to the inefficiency of the teacher, and in the latter to the fact that that form had to absorb a large number of the new pupils, who were not sufficiently advanced for the higher forms, and too old for the lower. I am deeply indebted to the teacher of the middle fourth for giving much extra training to these girls. The reading did not altogether please me. However, I have to report progress.

GEOGRAPHY.—The pupils having become accustomed to the drawing of maps from memory, and having had the comparatively uninteresting lists of towns, &c., enlivened by the teachers' well-considered remarks on the same, have studied geography *con amore*, and with marked success.

HISTORY.—I cannot report as favourably of the study of history. My examinations in this subject show a lower average than in any other. In one form the average was, on one occasion, 23 out of a possible 100. I have striven hard to induce my assistants to acquire a thorough knowledge of the period of history they have to teach, to examine their scholars without having the text-book in their hands, and so to breathe reality into the lesson by drawing freely, but judiciously, from their own stores of knowledge. Towards the end of the year I noticed signs of improvement, but still much requires to be done.

ARITHMETIC.—The important subject of arithmetic has obtained a large share of our time. In the year 1879 I was pained to observe that the girls, generally, lacked staying powers. They were not self-reliant. With a view to correct, or, at any rate, to modify this, I arranged that long sums should be given pretty frequently for some time. The sustained attention such sums require has been secured, and for several months short sums have taken the place of the long ones. There is, throughout the school, too great a desire to use the slate and not the head. I hope to succeed in getting this order reversed. Very good work has been done in arithmetic in all the forms.

WRITING.—Writing has deservedly occupied a prominent place in the work of the school. Whatever was put down on paper or on the slate, in or out of school, was looked upon as a writing lesson. Neatness, cleanliness, and order have thus been compulsory. I have every reason to be satisfied with the progress of the pupils.

EUCLID.—I never knew pupils better up in the *text* of Euclid. I cannot speak in so flattering a manner of the work of the pupils in the solution of riders. However, they did their best, and at the end of the year they were fairly acquainted with the most common processes in geometry.

ALGEBRA.—In algebra I have made haste slowly, my intention having been to give the students a thorough comprehension of the principles, without a ready and intelligent comprehension of which further progress is an uncertain quantity. I believe that all the scholars felt at home in algebra; they liked it, and spared no pains to master it.