

extra subjects, at a cost of £54 1s. 9d. each per annum to the Board. As regards an institution at which the holders of scholarships may take advantage of them, in the event of discontinuing secondary education at the Boys' School, the Board has the matter under consideration.

The Girls' District High School, under Miss Blyth, still maintains its high character and position. The extra subjects taught in this school are French and singing. From a pecuniary point of view, the Board does not think it would be advisable to interfere in any way with this institution, as it will be seen that the cost of teaching is the lowest but one of the schools referred to, and, if the fees received were deducted, it would be the lowest of all.

The Patea District High School has not been a success at any time, although it has been efficiently officered, but the cost of its maintenance has not encroached upon the Board's funds. The numbers who attended during the year for secondary education were as follows

	Boys.	Girls.
First quarter	4	0
Second quarter	5	0
Third quarter	7	1
Fourth quarter	7	0

The numbers now learning extra subjects are four boys only

SCHOLARSHIPS.—These were competed for in August last. The examiners were the Board's Inspector, and Messrs. Kenneth Wilson and A. McGregor, of Wellington, whose reports will be found in the appendix,* with the marks assigned to each candidate. An examination of the upper departments of the Wanganui and Patea District High Schools was also held by these gentlemen. Their report is not favourable.†

INSPECTION.—During the year the Board deemed it necessary to change its Inspector, and has appointed Mr W. H. Vereker Bindon, of Auckland, to the position. That gentleman has, however, since been taken ill, and, although he is now recovering, he has not as yet been able to assume the duties of the office. (Since arrived, and entered upon duty.) In consequence of this change, there is not any Inspector's report attached hereto, but the Board trusts that the returns which are to be found in the appendix referring to the inspection will supply the information required by the department.

TRUANT INSPECTOR.—The Board appointed a Truant Inspector for six months (upon a salary of £100) to visit the whole of the education district, and, finding that his efforts have met with a fair amount of success, they reappointed him for another six months, on the expiration of the former term. By comparing the attendances at the different schools during the year 1883 with that of 1882, the Board is able to perceive that there has generally been a steady increase, except where outside and unavoidable influences have interfered. Considering the large exodus which has taken place from parts of this district, it might have been supposed that the attendance would at least be stationary, except as regards the opening of new schools. In order, however, more clearly to show the results, a table is appended showing the increase and decrease, as the case may be, with remarks attached. The Board issued a circular to the Committees, suggesting that they should enter the Truant Inspector's name on their minutes as clerk, and thus place him in a position to prosecute, under the 73rd clause of the Act. This would relieve the Committees from the onus, although the instructions to take proceedings must still necessarily emanate from them. In some few cases the Committees availed themselves of the suggestion, but in no instance whatever is the Board aware of any proceedings having been instituted.

AUDIT OF COMMITTEES' ACCOUNTS.—In compliance with instructions from the department, the Board advertised for tenders to audit all the Committees' accounts, and ultimately accepted the lowest, that of Mr Wagstaff, for £40. It has been found that several of the Committees did not keep any books of accounts, whilst others have been kept in such an erroneous manner as to render them useless. No doubt the same difficulties in auditing will not occur again; and the Committees, knowing that their books will be annually inspected, will be prepared to present them in more correct form. The whole of the accounts have been summarized.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—The usual pupil-teachers' examination was held in June. The Board has decided that pupils wishing to enter as cadets must first pass the Fifth Standard, and it is desirable that they should serve for a year or two as such before they enter as pupil-teachers. No change has been made in the regulations previously passed and sanctioned with reference to pupil-teachers.

SCALE OF STAFF AND SALARIES.—The Board's scale of staff and salaries has generally worked satisfactorily. One circumstance has, however, arisen which required attention, viz., the period during which salary should be paid to a teacher whilst sick, and the following rule was ultimately passed "That not more than one month's salary in all during any year shall be allowed to teachers during sickness which renders them incapable of attending to their duties, such sickness to be proved by medical or other certificate satisfactorily to the Board. Any deficiency in the school staff caused by the absence of a teacher through illness to be made good at the discretion and convenience of the Board." Respecting school penny banks, classes for teachers, and evening classes, there are not any established under this Board. Teachers avail themselves generally of the Saturday classes established in Wanganui by private enterprise. The Board guarantees renewed employment to any young teachers from this district who may attend the Wellington Training College, and who pass for an E certificate.

REQUEST OF THE LATE DR. REES.—The term of five years, for which period sums amounting to £2,100 had been lent on mortgage, having expired, the Board has re-lent £800 of the amount at 7½ per cent. and £500 at 8 per cent. for a similar term, leaving a further sum of £800 on hand awaiting investment. It has been previously explained that this is a trust vested in the Board under the will of the late Dr. Rees for education of European children in the Town of Wanganui, and the interest has always been devoted towards paying the salary of the Headmaster of the

* Not reprinted. † Reprinted in Parliamentary Paper E.—1B, 1884: Reports of Inspectors of Schools.