

Christchurch training colleges for teachers appear to have given great satisfaction to the principals of these institutions. At Wellington, Miss Morgan, formerly pupil-teacher at Gisborne, is at the head of the college list, and Miss Corbyn, formerly belonging to the Napier School, obtained her Class D certificate at the last examination. Both Miss Morgan and Miss Corbyn, with Messrs. Alpers and Ryder, students in training from this district at the Christchurch Training College, have taken their papers for the Class D certificate, and all have passed the matriculation examination in connection with the University during the past year. The benefits arising from the granting of training-college scholarships to ex-pupil-teachers will, it is hoped, prove of great advantage to this district in obtaining thoroughly-trained teachers for the schools; and the Board hopes that the plan which the Government has adopted in this matter will be continued.

SCHOOL-BUILDINGS.—The Board has to express its great disappointment at the treatment of this district in the matter of school supply. Each report sent by the Board to the Minister of Education for several years past has pointed out the insufficiency of school accommodation for the number of children attending schools. It is estimated that there are about six thousand children of school age in the district, and, if due allowance is made for those attending private or other schools, at least 5,300 remain who ought to be found on the registers of the Board schools. The actual number on the school-rolls on the 31st December was 4,110, or an increase of about 15 per cent. compared with last year's attendance. The school accommodation remains the same as it was a year ago, when the Board pointed out that there was a deficiency of school supply in the district. Estimated upon the present school attendance, there are only eighty-one seats provided for every hundred pupils attending school; but, as the actual accommodation available is not evenly distributed throughout the district—that is, there are school districts which are provided with accommodation somewhat in excess of their present requirements—those districts which are undersupplied contain only sixty-eight seats for every hundred children in attendance. Some of the districts have no accommodation whatever, but the work of teaching is carried on in buildings altogether unsuitable for school purposes. With the money that has been annually placed at the Board's disposal during the past few years no needful works of importance could be undertaken, and the year just closed has been worse than others in this respect. Applications have been received for the erection of schoolhouses at Patutahi, Te Arai, Waerenga-a-hika, Tologa Bay, Manutahi, all in the Cook County; and at Mangatua and Te Onga Onga, in the Waipawa County; and for additions at Hastings, Clive, Waipukurau, Waipawa, Makaretu, Woodville, Danevirke, Matawhero, Makatoku, Ormond, and Ormondville: but the Board, though recognizing the need for providing necessary accommodation in each of the above-mentioned districts, besides many works of lesser though of pressing importance in a number of other districts, has been powerless, through lack of funds, to promote and carry out one of the most important duties, as defined in section 35 of the Education Act.

SEWING.—The Board is pleased to report that sewing continues to receive special attention in the majority of the schools. At the annual examination in November more than eight hundred specimens were forwarded to Napier for examination, and the reports of the examiners show that the subject has reached a high standard of efficiency in most of the district schools. Captain Russell's prizes, which now constitute such an important feature in this examination, were awarded to Nancy Renouf, of the Napier District School; and to Maud Farmer and Mary Baker, of the Gisborne School. The reports of the examiners will be found appended.

SCHOOL COMMITTEES.—The majority of the School Committees continue to show much interest and activity in promoting the welfare of the children in their several districts. Latterly, however, great complaints have been made by them of the uselessness of trying to carry out their duties when, now that their schools are overcrowded, nothing is done to relieve the pressure by providing the requisite accommodation. Nearly £500 has been subscribed by Committees for special purposes during the year, and in two districts the Committees themselves have provided funds for the erection of school-buildings, the Board being unable to grant any assistance, though recognizing the requirements as urgent. In most of the districts teachers and Committees continue to promote the establishment of school libraries; but the Board regrets that the library established at the Napier School has been closed; but whether by the Committee or the teachers the Board has not yet been informed. The accounts of the several School Committees have been duly audited in accordance with the Order in Council. The receipts amounted to £2,173 3s. 3d., and the expenditure to £1,961 7s.; leaving a balance in hand at the end of the year of £211 16s. 3d.

BOARD'S INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.—The income received by the Board as capitation allowance, inspection subsidy, and revenue from primary education reserves, was £13,212 2s. 4d., which, added to £260 13s. 5d., the balance available to the School Fund Account on the 31st December, 1884, gives a total income of £13,472 for school maintenance. The expenditure during the same period for salaries, payments to School Committees, &c., amounted to £12,486 1s. 6d., leaving a balance in hand of £986 14s. 3d. at the close of the school year. A detailed statement of income and expenditure, together with supplementary reports relating to the progress of education, is appended herewith.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

J. D. ORMOND, Chairman.