

made for carrying on the training in a less expensive but, it is hoped, an efficient manner, by utilising the services of the students as teachers in the Practising School. Mr. Malcolm's report for 1887 is appended.

FINANCE.—Towards the close of the year the question of a reduction in the public expenditure on education came prominently forward. A Parliamentary Committee was appointed to consider the working of the Education Act, and forwarded a series of questions to the various Boards and other educational authorities. The replies given by this Board were as follows: (1.) The interests of education would not suffer by raising the school-age for entrance from five to six years; but the real saving would be little or nothing in the country schools, and in the town schools would not be in proportion to the diminution in numbers. Ultimately the saving would be chiefly in the item of school-buildings. (2.) The payment of fees would be no economy from a national point of view: it would only be introducing a far more expensive mode of collection, and one that has been found to work badly in all systems of national primary education. The payment of fees by the more advanced scholars only would be a most objectionable tax upon progress. (3.) The Board does not believe that the educational system in this district could be conducted efficiently with smaller means than are now at its disposal. Any curtailment of national grants for education will have to be supplemented by school districts. This means a more expensive method of raising the necessary funds. The Board has at present a large number of applications for necessary school-buildings, which there are no funds to meet. (4.) While the Board is not prepared to indorse all the items of the present syllabus, and would prefer more time being given to the thorough teaching of fewer subjects, it does not believe that such an alteration would materially affect the cost of primary education.

In December the Government sent notice that it was intended to cease payment of the extra capitation allowance of 4s., to raise the school-age from five years to six, to abolish the working average, and to discontinue grants to training schools. These changes, all of which, excepting the proposal to raise the school-age, were carried into effect, involved a loss of income to the Board of upwards of £7,000. To meet this deficiency it became necessary for the Board to make a correspondingly large reduction in its expenditure, which at the present date has been satisfactorily accomplished: But, as no actual retrenchment was made till some time after the beginning of the new year, its details will find their proper place in the report for the year 1888.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The examination for scholarships was held in the month of April. The number of competitors was 115, of whom 60 (36 boys and 24 girls) were in Class A, 43 (24 boys and 19 girls), in Class B 7 (5 boys and 2 girls) in Class C, and 5 (2 boys and 3 girls) in Class D. Scholarships were awarded to Edith Verran, Thomas Vangioni, Hubert Prince, Andrew Muir, Elsie Low, Reginald Dixon, and John Olliver in Class A; George Lancaster, Jeannie Mulholland, Sidney Denham, John McIlroy and Philip Foster in Class B; Clara Waterston, Rose Smith, and Thomas Gibson in Class C; Kate Isherwood and William Dawson in Class D. The scholarships current at the end of 1887 were held as shown in the following table. [Not reprinted.]

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

W. CHRYSTALL, Chairman.

REPORT ON THE NORMAL SCHOOL.

SIR,—

Normal School, Christchurch, 8th February, 1888.

I have the honour to submit my report on the Normal School for the year ended 31st December, 1887.

The session commenced on the 1st February, with 25 female students and 11 male students: total, 36; and at the end of the year there were in attendance 38 females and 19 males: total, 57. Of these, 15 females and 2 males sat in January of the present year for the E Certificate, and 1 female for completion of certificate; 15 females and 10 males sat for the D Certificate, and 5 for completion of certificate, these having obtained a partial D through matriculation or previous examination. One female and one male presented themselves in November last for the first half of the B.A. degree, and two females for the second half. Seventeen students also presented themselves for matriculation at the University of New Zealand.

During the last two years I have observed a very marked improvement in the art of teaching and of class management among the pupil-teachers in the service of the Board, plainly indicating either that those selected are better adapted for teaching than many of their predecessors were, or that the head teachers of the schools in which they have served their apprenticeship have been paying more attention to the teaching of these young persons than formerly was the case. With reference to selection, I am strongly of opinion that the Board, through their Inspectors, and the teachers of the schools only, should have a voice in the matter, because otherwise local influence may mar the whole of the efforts of the teachers. When once suitable persons have been selected, and a period of probation allowed to thoroughly test their fitness, the head teachers cannot be too careful with their training; for where, as in North Canterbury, such a large number of pupil-teachers are employed, the condition of education in the different localities must depend to a great degree upon the ability of these junior assistants, both as scholars and teachers. In my report for the year 1884 I pointed out means to attain to the end desiderated, and I am pleased to hear that several masters have adopted my suggestions and found them very valuable. As I then said, so I say again, "To tell them [*i.e.*, the pupil-teachers] to teach is not enough: they must be shown how to teach. The teacher would find it to be advantageous to all concerned were he frequently to give model lessons in the presence of all his pupil-teachers, and to arrange that they in their turn taught certain subjects before him and their fellow pupil-teachers. In other words, criticism lessons should be given at regular periods, when the headmaster would be able to point out defects, and to show how