

The staff is quite sufficient for the present requirements of the school. During the temporary absence of the Lady Principal in the first term of the year Miss Sheard and Miss Greeson acted as full-time teachers. Owing to ill-health, Miss Mills was granted leave of absence for the latter half of the second term, and her work was shared by Miss Sheard and Miss Greeson, with some additional outside assistance from Miss L. B. Sanders.

The chief improvements made during the year were the sinking of a deep well, the connection of the school with the main sewer, and the erection of a bicycle-shed. There is now an excellent water-supply, and the other improvements have been found very satisfactory.

BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL.

The number of boys on the roll for the last term of 1898 was 255. Mr. J. P. Grossman's resignation was accepted as from the 31st July last, and Mr. J. Harkness, M.A., late Scholar of Corpus Christi, Oxford, was *locum tenens* till the end of the year. Applications were invited by advertisement for the position of assistant master, and the result was the election of Mr. Percy Rowland, B.A., late Foundation Scholar of St. Paul's, London; Scholar of Hertford College, Oxford; winner of English Essay Prize, 1891; Chancellor's Essay, 1894; Cobden Essay, 1896, at Oxford University.

Last term an honours board, handsomely carved by Mr. J. H. Menzies, and presented by him to the school, was unveiled by the Rev. Dr. Morley, acting on behalf of the Chairman. In the same term a new cricket pavilion, to which the Board contributed, but which has been mainly paid for by the efforts of the school itself, was opened by the Hon. E. C. J. Stevens.

The various departments of the school work progressed satisfactorily, including the outside classes for gymnasium, workshop, drill, and swimming.

The honours gained during the year were as follows: At the recent December examinations T. M. Curnow and F. Kissell won Junior University scholarships, being placed respectively third and fourteenth. S. Steele, who was first on the credit list, will also be entitled to a Junior University scholarship by the resignation of F. Kissell, who has qualified for a Gammack scholarship. Three other boys obtained places on the credit list. Nineteen boys were candidates for matriculation, and sixteen passed. Two boys passed the medical preliminary examination. Two were elected to Senior scholarships given by the Board of Education. Among old boys Mr. A. R. Craddock qualified for the B.Sc. in Engineering; Mr. W. H. Dawson obtained his M.B.Ch.B. at Edinburgh with second-class honours; and Mr. W. A. C. Sandstein concluded a distinguished career at the same University by obtaining his M.B.Ch.B. with first-class honours, and winning the James Scott Scholarship and Freeland Barbour Fellowship. Mr. W. D. Campbell was awarded the degree of M.A. by the Senate, his papers having gone down in the "Mataura." Mr. E. H. B. Milsom won a valuable scholarship at Guy's Hospital, London.

Ten boys passed the recent Junior Civil Service examination, one being placed second on the list for New Zealand. One also passed the Senior Civil Service examination.

PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The public library consists of three distinct departments, namely: The circulating library, available to subscribers only; the reference library, free; the reading-room, free. The building of the circulating library is in very good order. The space, however, is fully occupied, and will have to be enlarged before many years are passed; even now additional floor-space is much needed, as also shelving, for the monthly increasing number of volumes. The building used for the reference library is also substantial, and suitable for the purposes of the department, and only requires additional shelving to supply our wants for some little time. The free reading-room has done duty since about the year 1863, and the problem has to be faced how funds can be provided for replacing the present dilapidated structure by a building more worthy of the city and of the objects for which it was originally designed.

Reference Department.—The annual inspection of the books was made in January, when it was found that none were missing, though one work—viz., "Egypt," by G. Ebers, which was lately procured from England—was mutilated. So far as can be seen this is the only case of vandalism which has been committed. Considerable damage has, as usual, been caused to the binding of the books by the action of the gas, especially to those bound in calf and morocco. The total number of books and pamphlets added during the past year was 504, bringing the total in the reference library to 11,537. In addition to a few donations from private donors, which have been acknowledged, publications have been presented to this department by the Governments of the United States of America, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania, and New Zealand.

Circulating Department.—The total number of books in this department is 17,925. The number of new books and renewals added during the year is 1,115. The average number of subscribers for the year was 1,770. It was found necessary to remove from the shelves during the year no less than 275 volumes, which were, through mutilation and bad treatment generally, rendered unfit for issue. Of this number 256 were works of fiction, seven were works of travels, eleven were bound magazines, one miscellaneous.

The *North American Review* and *Pearson's* have been added to the list of magazines taken in, bringing the total number up to fifty-six. The subscriptions received during 1898 amounted to £857 15s., which is the largest amount received in any year.

The library was closed from the 2nd to the 7th January for the annual stock-taking, when it was found that sixty-nine volumes were missing. The greater proportion of these, however, have since come to hand. The number of books issued during the year was 102,768, as against 89,610 issued in 1897.