

Three pupils in the third year and one in the second were absent during part of the time occupied by the examination, owing to attendance at the Matriculation Examination. Opportunity was found, however, to test these in Latin, algebra, and Euclid.

The general result of the year's work is very satisfactory. The syllabus of instruction in the various subjects has been sufficient, and, with very few exceptions, the pupils exhibited, in each branch, a commendable amount of knowledge of the course studied. The number of weak papers—*i.e.*, with less than 50 per cent. of marks—are: Latin, one; algebra, one; English, two; Euclid, one; arithmetic, five; geography, one. On the other hand, over 90 per cent. of marks was obtained in the following number of papers: Latin, 9; algebra, 17; English, 6; Euclid, 8; arithmetic, 4; geography, 4. The average results in arithmetic are fairly satisfactory, while the remaining compulsory subjects have been very thoroughly prepared. In English the course is an extensive one, including grammar, composition, and the study of the text set for the year—namely, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* (Browning), and *Macbeth* (Shakespeare), besides figures of speech by the second- and third-year pupils. This wide course has been intelligently studied and very evident interest has been taken in its preparation.

Of the optional subjects, the results are—in French, good, and in chemistry, satisfactory. No pupils have taken the course of book-keeping.

A. J. MORTON, Inspector.

NORTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 27th February, 1901.

I have the honour to present the following report of the proceedings of the Education Board of the District of North Canterbury for the year ending 31st December, 1900:—

THE BOARD.—The three members who retired at the end of March, 1900, were Mr. Buddo, Mr. Munnings, and Mr. Rennie, of whom Mr. Munnings did not offer himself for re-election. At an election held on the 7th March Mr. Rennie, Mr. Buddo, and Mr. D. McMillan, jun., were elected. The Board held nineteen meetings during the year, of which one was a special meeting.

THE BOARD'S REPRESENTATIVES.—Mr. G. H. Saxton was re-elected a member of the Akaroa High School Board, Mr. Andrew Orr and Mr. Donald Williamson members of the Ashburton High School Board, and Mr. Hugh Boyd member of the Rangiora High School Board. During the year Mr. Saxton resigned his position on the Akaroa High School Board, and Mr. W. H. Montgomery was appointed to the vacancy. Mr. Buddo continues to represent the Board as a Commissioner of Education Reserves.

BUILDINGS.—During the year 1900 new schools were built at Birch Hill, Hundalee, and Omihia, and teachers' houses at Domett, Port Robinson, and Spottswood. An addition was made to the master's house at Tai Tapu, and at Christchurch West a new caretaker's house was erected, the old building having become unfit for habitation. Of the works authorised towards the close of the year, a new school at Hanmer Plains, teachers' houses at Loweliffe, Ruapuna, Eyreton, and Okain's Bay, and a large addition to the Addington School, have been put in hand. The total expenditure on buildings during the year was £7,294 7s. 9d., an amount £579 in excess of the grant received from the Government. Necessary repairs and renovations absorbed a large portion of the building grant. In this latter respect the demands on the Board's funds are naturally increasing year by year, in proportion to the number of wooden buildings to be maintained, some of which, owing to the decayed state of the timber, are quite past repair. Towards the end of 1900 the master's house at Ruapuna and the roof of the French Farm School were destroyed by fire. In connection with the application already made for a refund of the cost of rebuilding, it may be pointed out that it is now fourteen years since the Board received a grant for making good damage caused by fire.

The number of schools in operation at the end of the year, including eighteen aided schools, was 202, classified as follows: Under 15 pupils (of which eleven were aided schools), twenty-three; 15 and under 20 pupils (four aided), twenty-two; 20 and under 25 pupils (two aided), twenty-two; 25 and under 50 pupils (one aided), sixty-six; 50 and under 75 pupils, eighteen; 75 and under 100 pupils, seventeen; 100 and under 150 pupils, nine; 150 and under 300 pupils, twelve; 300 and under 500 pupils, nine; 500 and upwards, four.

MAINTENANCE.—The expenditure on teachers' salaries and allowances amounted to £52,320 2s. 11d., and the grants to School Committees, with other incidental expenses, to £6,669 12s. 1d., making a total of £58,989 15s. The working average for the year was 16,741, but the average of the four quarters, commencing with the December quarter of 1899, on which payments were actually made, was 16,780. The cost per head of teachers' salaries was, therefore, £3 2s. 4½d., and the cost of maintaining the schools, including incidental expenses, £3 10s. 3½d. per head.

TEACHERS.—The total number of teachers in the Board's service at the end of 1900 (besides forty-four sewing mistresses and one temporary part-time teacher) was 494. Of these, 228 (142 males and 86 females) were heads of schools or departments, or in sole charge; 158 (37 males and 121 females) were assistants; and 108 (21 males and 87 females) were pupil-teachers. During the year there has been a further decrease in the number of pupil-teachers, a circumstance which can hardly fail to give satisfaction to the comparatively large number of certificated teachers now seeking employment.

NORMAL SCHOOL.—The number of students in training at the Normal School during the year was forty-two (including nine of the second year); of these fifteen were males and twenty-seven females. Of the twenty-two students who entered for the Matriculation Examination twenty passed. Full information upon the work of the training department is given in the Principal's report, appended hereto. In its annual report of 1899 the Board emphasized the need of an