

INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

Thirty-one pupils were present at the examination.

Latin was very good in Class IV., and the average in the other classes was fair.

English in Classes I., II., and IV. was good, and in Class III. indifferent.

French was very good in Classes I., II., and IV., and fair in Class III.

Euclid in Class I. showed very satisfactory progress, but was weak in the other classes.

Algebra was excellent in Classes I., III., and IV., and weak in Class II.

Arithmetic was excellent in Classes III. and IV., very fair in Class II., and fair in Class I.

In Class IV. the average time spent by the pupils in secondary work had been three years six months; in Class III., one year eleven months; in Class II., one year; in Class I., four months and a half. The last class consisted in the main of pupils who during the year had passed Standard VI. with credit at other schools, and consequently had been granted free tuition. No pupil had been longer than six months in the class.

On the whole, sound work had been done, and there was much that was commendable both on account of the diligence of the pupils and on account of the skill of the teachers. On the other hand, there might have been more thoroughness in some of the work. This was very noticeable in Class III., and in the Euclid and algebra of Class II.

The provision made for the teaching of science is most inadequate at present. There are no proper appliances and conveniences, and the instruction is therefore of a most empirical character. Such a school as the Stratford District High School cannot be considered complete until equipped for the efficient teaching of this branch of knowledge, which is so important and is so rapidly increasing in importance.

W. E. SPENCER, Inspector.

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Education Office, Wanganui, 31st March, 1902.

I have the honour to present the annual report of this Board for the year ending the 31st December, 1901.

BOARD.—At the annual election of members in August, under the new Act, the only change which took place was in the election of Mr. James W. Baker, who replaced Mr. W. T. Wood, of Palmerston North. The Board is now composed of Messrs. G. S. Bridge (Chairman), Frederick Pirani, M.H.R., the Rev. John Ross, F. Y. Lethbridge, M.H.R., B. C. Robbins, W. Corry, F. M. Spurdle, R. A. Adams, and James W. Baker.

SCHOOLS.—The December return of 1901 showed that the Board had 150 schools in operation. During the year new schools were opened at Lytton Street (Feilding), Masterton-Tenui, Pakihikura, Tauporae, Brownlee, Huripari, Komako, Makotuku, and Mount Curl. The schools at Koeka and Matoroa, open at the end of 1900, were closed during the year.

ATTENDANCE.—The average roll-number for the year was 11,074, and the average attendance was 9,097.

TEACHING STAFF.—At the close of the year there were 304 teachers in the Board's employ, 136 being males and 168 females. Since the close of the year all the schools have been restaffed in accordance with "The Public-School Teachers' Salaries Act, 1901."

BUILDINGS.—The past year has been a very busy one with the Board in connection with the building and repairs to schools and residences. During the year the following buildings were erected: Schools at Pakihikura and Lytton Street (Feilding); schools and residences (combined) at Masterton-Tenui, Makotuku, and Ohakune. Residences were built at Matapu and Kiwitea, and additions to schools and residences at many other places. Contracts were let for the erection of schools at Awahou South, Livingstone, and Waitohi. The Building Committee has very carefully supervised the expenditure on these works, and makes a regular monthly report to the Board.

A large number of the buildings now require painting, and it is the Board's intention to invite tenders for the work at an early date.

COMMITTEES' SCHOOL FUND.—The Board is very anxious to increase the Committees' School Fund as soon as the funds at their disposal will permit. At present they do not feel justified in doing so, as they must wait and ascertain how the grant under the new Act will work out.

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—During the year the Board, at the request of the Committees, and with the sanction of the Education Department, has converted the Wanganui Boys', Feilding, Hawera, and Marton Schools into district high schools, and the attendance of pupils has fully justified its action in the matter. It has since been decided to convert the College Street (Palmerston North) School into a district high school, and to combine the Technical School with it. With this end in view Government has been asked to make a grant for the purpose of erecting suitable accommodation, and the Board trusts that its request will soon be acceded to. In the meantime a building has been rented, and the school has commenced under most favourable circumstances.