

character of the practical instruction." Mr. Davies has already visited the centres where our district high schools are established, and he has received both from Committees and teachers' great encouragement in his work. We look forward to seeing in most of our country schools a course in nature-study in the primary department, leading up to practical work in the garden, and to extended experimental work in the secondary classes of the district high schools.

SECONDARY SCHOOL IN WELLINGTON.—In our report of last year, and on previous occasions, we have advocated the establishment of another secondary school in Wellington, which would, in addition to giving a wide educational training, prepare children for a commercial or an industrial life, and we are pleased to note that the Board has applied to the Minister of Education for the establishment of such a school. The application is supported by the signatures of the parents of 211 scholars, but we are of opinion that the number likely to attend would be considerably more than this. The numbers entered this year at Newtown are 116, at Terrace 117, and at the Technical School 290—a total of 523—and as every year there is likely to be an increase, it is evident that the demand for an education beyond that of the primary school is [such that the Minister will, we feel confident, give the application due consideration.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—As most of our pupil-teachers are matriculated students, under the new regulations only six candidates were compelled to enter for the first examination—namely, the Junior Civil Service. One, who was absent from duty the greater part of the year owing to illness, was excused, five entered, three passed, and two failed to reach the required minimum of marks.

TRAINING-COLLEGE.—The training-college, which we have been looking forward to for years, has now become an established fact. On the acceptance of the Thorndon School for the purposes of such an institution, several conferences were held with the architect and the Department, and we here beg to acknowledge the valuable suggestions made by the Inspector-General, who readily gave us much of his valuable time. The plans of additions and alterations were accepted by the Department; and, as the contractor is at present engaged on the building, we hope soon to have suitable accommodation for efficiently carrying on the work of a training-school. The appointment to the principalship of such an experienced educationist as Mr. Gray augurs well for the efficiency of the institution. The Board recognising that the most important and most difficult work in our schools lies in the infant department, has appointed as kindergarten mistress, a teacher selected from the best training institution in England by Professor Sadler, one of the most eminent authorities on education in Europe. This lady has previously had experience with infants as well as with students in training. Moreover, she will come to us with the latest ideas from England on infant-training, a branch of educational work which has been receiving special attention of late. Her assistance, therefore, promises to be valuable not only to the institution itself, but to all the teachers of the district. The regulations drafted by the Department wisely allow of the entrance to the training-college of students of a certain academical standing, who have not had previous experience in teaching. This arrangement prepares the way for the gradual elimination of pupil-teachers by the substitution of trained assistants, a reform we have been looking forward to for some time. The next improvement to be made, on the abolition of pupil-teachers, is a reduction of the number of pupils allotted to every assistant. In the higher grades of schools the scale allows of the addition to the staff of an assistant for every increase of sixty in the average. This number is far too large to enable a teacher to carry out the spirit of the syllabus efficiently. We recommend the Board, on the approval of an Inspector, to allow our country teachers to enter the training-college for a short period. Even a week's experience would be invaluable to many of them and to the children under their charge, and, subject to the consent of Committees, an arrangement can easily be made to effect this without interfering with the work of their schools.

It is gratifying to note that Parliament, by increasing their salaries and also by making provision to establish a superannuation fund, has recognised that our teachers have not been well paid in the past for their services. Under the Superannuation Act of last session, several teachers who have served the Board faithfully and efficiently for nearly thirty years, will be retiring from the active work of the profession, and it is only fitting that they should receive some recognition from that State in whose moulding and building-up they have taken a most onerous and most important share. We welcome as a colleague Mr. J. S. Tennant, M.A., B.Sc., who began his work as an Inspector towards the end of the year, and we look forward to his valuable co-operation in our efforts to administer the work of this district.

We have, &c.,

The Chairman, Wellington Education Board.

T. R. FLEMING,
F. H. BAKEWELL, } Inspectors.

MARLBOROUGH.

SIR,—

Education Office, Blenheim, 18th January, 1906.

I have the honour to present my second general report on the schools of Marlborough.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.—We have sixty-six schools on our list, of which (from defect of teachers) six were not operating. These six are all small schools of from two to eight children, situated in the Sounds. The Board is willing to accept, as teachers of these schools, youths of either sex, if in other ways fit, and qualified by having the proficiency certificate (Standard VI).

INSPECTION.—Sixty visits of inspection were made to schools under the Board, and nineteen special visits in connection with school gardens and new schools. Opportunity was taken, on these visits, to teach such subjects as appeared specially weak—the metric system, geography, and military drill receiving most attention. The Governor is empowered by the Weights and Measures Act of 1903 to declare from 1st January, 1906, the metric system of weights and measures the only system to be legally used in New Zealand. It is highly important, therefore, that the children receive much practice