

will continue to be of a comparatively low standard. Centralisation by launch would at present be costly and not free from danger, and the amount of time spent by the children on the water would be out of all proportion to the benefit derived. There is great difficulty in obtaining qualified teachers for the small remuneration afforded by the limited number of children available in each locality.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.—Saturday classes for teachers were held throughout the year, the subjects being cookery, agricultural chemistry, and (during the latter part of the year) singing.

MANUAL AND TECHNICAL.—Instruction in manual and technical subjects is now given in most of the schools. The subjects most widely taught were brushwork and modelling in plasticine. Other classes carried on were woodwork, cookery, elementary agriculture, needlework, &c. The Board regrets to note the reduction of capitation on cookery classes from 15s. to 12s. 6d., when an increase of 2s. 6d. was rather to be expected. In administering these classes even the largest Boards, such as Auckland and North Canterbury, find it necessary to make this part of our education system no longer free. Therefore it can be easily understood that the smaller Boards are likely to be seriously hampered by this reduction. This Board is of opinion that the time has arrived when the whole control of manual and technical school classes in each district should be placed in the hands of the respective Education Boards—the Government merely providing a grant based on the yearly average attendance. At present there appears to be a great deal of unnecessary registration of classes, &c., involving much loss of time; and it is inconceivable that the classes could not be properly established and conducted without the numberless forms used in the present administration of this branch of the system.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The number of scholarships in force at the close of the year was sixteen, including three Junior National Scholarships. On the results of the examination held in December seven Board Scholarships and one National Scholarship were awarded. The Board is pleased to note that the maximum age of candidates for Junior National Scholarships has been raised to fourteen years.

PHYSICAL INSTRUCTION.—Physical instruction is carried on in all but two very small schools in the district. The Inspector reports that the cadet companies preserve a highly satisfactory degree of efficiency. The Board is pleased to record that during the year two valuable donations for the encouragement of rifle shooting among the cadets were received—one from Mr. J. C. Chaytor, of £105, to enable the Board to provide annually at least five prizes of £1 each; the other, a Champion Belt from Mr. J. F. Nosworthy, to be held each year by the boy making the highest score at the annual competition.

BUILDINGS.—During the year a new school, with living-rooms attached, has been built at Te Awaite, and a teacher's residence erected at Ward. The re-erection of the Spring Creek School and the erection of a school at Rimu Gully are now in hand. The school building at the Grove was shifted to Linkwater, in order to have one central school for the Cullensville and Grove districts. A large amount was spent on maintenance, and most of the buildings owned by the Board are now in a very fair state of repair.

FINANCE.—The balance-sheet shows a credit balance of £527 16s. 3d.; but the liabilities at the end of the year amount to a considerable sum, and it will therefore still be necessary to observe the strictest economy.

STAFF.—Mr. John Smith, who had so capably filled the position of Secretary and Treasurer for seventeen years, continued in office till the 31st May, when he retired on superannuation. Mr. E. S. Hylton was appointed to fill the vacancy.

I am, &c.,

WILLIAM H. MACEY, Acting-Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.