

existing schools at Mangapapa and Te Hapara (near Gisborne), Mahora North and Twyford (near Hastings), Makauri, Ongaonga, Waipukurau, Ormond, and Port Awanui. A number of smaller improvements have also been carried out in other districts to meet the changing requirements of the schools. These places represent centres where the population is on the increase, but the annual returns point out that seventy-eight of the schools under the Board had increased in attendance during the year. The principal increases, however, centre round the larger towns of the district. Thus the group of schools in and around Hastings increased in number by 227 pupils; the Napier group, including Taradale, increased by 195; Gisborne by 93, Dannevirke by 25, and Wairoa 38. These increases account for 578 of the total increase in the schools for the year.

The opening of the new schools at Mahora West and Napier West respectively has not yet met the full school requirements of the centres to which these schools severally belong. Napier West School has desk provision for 240 children, but the attendance is more than a hundred in excess of this number. So also the accommodation provided at Mahora West just suffices to meet the increase in the school attendance of the district for the year. Hastings Main District High School remains, in the matter of children attending, where it was when increased provision was made a matter of urgency two years ago. The rooms are much overcrowded, and the division of the large rooms into class-rooms has not diminished the difficulties of both teachers and children. Another building is required for at least three hundred pupils, and some further provision is likely to be called for on account of the secondary department, which is increasing rapidly in numbers.

The provision here pointed out as urgent does not represent the only school requirements at the present time. Applications for the erection of schools have been received from Te Uri (ten miles or more south-east of Whetukura), Sherenden (a new Government settlement north-west of Fernhill), Waingake (in the Te Arai Valley), Poverty Bay, the Grange (near Cape Kidnappers), Otawhao (a special settlement near Norsewood), and both Ngatapa and Tokomaru Bay have applied for additions. Each of the places named is isolated and the population small, and it is difficult to advise as to the best course to adopt. The conveyance of children for long distances who have to walk two or three miles before reaching a conveyance is a heavy demand on young children, and the cost for carriage would easily pay the interest on a school building. Until the settlement of a permanent population it may be advisable to provide a special form of movable building which could be used for school purposes. Such a building could be removed to another place as soon as circumstances made this necessary.

The residences provided for teachers are mostly in good condition. They are neat and tidy, and to the credit of the majority of teachers who occupy them it must be said that the grounds surrounding them are well and carefully kept. Complaint is made again and again by the lady teachers in charge of small country schools where there is no residence that lodging is difficult to obtain. In small outlying districts where so much real help has been given in order to maintain a school, the residents should deem it a duty to see the teacher is provided with a comfortable home. It is to the interest of every parent in the country to see that this is done, for the most difficult thing to do in connection with "school vacancies" is to provide a teacher for a district that has no provision in the way of board and residence. Efficient teachers refuse to go to places where their efficiency is not recognized by the settlers.

*Teachers.*—The number of teachers in the service of the Board continues to increase. At the end of December, inclusive of pupil-teachers and probationers, the number in the service of the Board was 367. Of this number 226 held full qualifying certificates as teachers recognized by the central Department, and were employed as principal, sole, or assistant teachers. In addition to these, twenty-six had gained what is known as a "partial pass," which suffices to show they are making efforts to qualify for the full certificate. The teachers' classification and promotion scheme has worked smoothly. In the absence of provision for removal expenses it was found advisable to advertise vacancies and thus enable teachers willing to accept a change to indicate their wish. Recommendations are based on applications in conjunction with the scheme. Classified teachers are not required to add credentials to their form of application.

Uncertificated teachers have been taught by correspondence, and where possible by Saturday classes. Practical work in science was supplied by special tuition provided during midwinter at Hastings. The experience gained during the past two years suggests the adoption of a modification of the "correspondence course" and the holding of a "summer school" towards the end of the school year. We consider that a month could be well spent at these classes instead of the present fortnight. It would be advantageous if pupil-teachers and probationers could share the benefit of them. At present regulations forbid expenditure for this purpose, but the funds available are sufficient if authority be given to use them.

There have been considerable additions to the teachers' library at the office, and many useful educational magazines and papers are there on view, and may be used by any of the teachers in the service of the Board.

*District High Schools.*—[See E.-6. Report on Secondary Education.]

*Handwork, Needlework, &c.*—[See E.-5. Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.]

*Proficiency Examination.*—The examination for certificates of proficiency is considered by the parents in this district as one of much importance. This event took place in December, following the examinations for National and Board Scholarships. The amended regulations dealing with the subjects of instruction altered somewhat the plan of testing the children. To attain the proficiency certificate a pupil must show satisfactory progress in at least three of the subjects geography, history, science, handwork, drawing. The specific recognition of history, science, and handwork in this connection is new. The regulation could usefully be applied to class pro-