

APPENDIX.

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF EDUCATION BOARDS, INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS, AND AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTORS.

AUCKLAND.

REPORT OF SENIOR INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

THE following gives the names of the district high schools in operation at the close of 1914, with the enrolment in the secondary departments: Aratapu roll, 23; Cambridge roll, 17; Coromandel roll, 17; Paeroa roll, 27; Pukekohe roll, 13; Rotorua roll, 22; Tauranga roll, 24; Te Aroha, 9; Te Kuiti roll, 14; Waihi roll, 35; Normal roll, 19: total, 220.

In general the pupils are either qualifying for one or other of the public examinations, or are qualifying for senior free places along other channels. The teaching is characterized by earnestness, and in most cases commendable results are being achieved.

In five schools the rural course is in operation, and in others, which are beyond reach of wood-work and cookery centres, as much of this course as can be overtaken is included in the curriculum. During one day each week the Board's instructors in agriculture visit the schools, taking the rural course, and assist in the teaching of those subjects included in the term "elementary agriculture," and in other kindred subjects.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced in securing suitable male assistants, partly owing to the relatively small salaries offered, and partly because teachers are disposed to regard the secondary departments of district high schools as unprofitable channels for promotion. It is to be hoped that the scale of salaries payable under the new Act will attract a better type of male assistant, and that teachers will come to realize that promotion awaits successful effort in the district-high-school class just as surely as in the standard classes of the primary school.

The majority of the schools are still without suitable laboratory equipment, and, until this is provided, work in the science subjects cannot be followed by the best results.

It is to be regretted that parents and others do not fully realize the benefits to be derived from the presence of district high schools, as shown by the small enrolment in some of the secondary classes. Pupils going to work at the close of primary-school life must necessarily be insufficiently prepared for the discharge of those duties and responsibilities awaiting them, and cannot hope for the same measure of success as others whose school days are more prolonged, and who, in consequence, enter on the real work of life with a better foundation of knowledge and more highly developed intelligence. The rural course, moreover, which will gradually find its way into all district high schools, is specially designed to become a very real and valuable preparation for the work which the majority of our young people in country districts will ultimately find themselves engaged in; so that the attitude of indifference which has led to the closing of certain district high schools, and may lead to the closing of others, can be explained only on the assumption that parents and pupils do not realize the importance of the training provided, or the necessity for taking advantage of its benefits.

TARANAKI.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

There is ample evidence that the rural classes at the Stratford District High School are becoming more popular each year. Nevertheless, it is probable that many people do not even yet realize the excellence of this comprehensive theoretical and practical course. It is intended especially for those who, while not aiming at a University training, or willing to devote themselves for four or five years to those studies which, however interesting and profitable, are yet of no direct and practical use, wish nevertheless to continue their studies for two or more years after leaving the primary school, with a view to enabling them to go back to the land equipped with a thorough knowledge of their business, and able to avail themselves fully of all the aids to success afforded by the intelligent application of scientific principles to their particular needs.

While, however, this aim is kept steadily in view, it is recognized that without a sound basis of general knowledge all such special knowledge fails of its full effect. The students therefore receive a thorough training in English and mathematics. In addition to these staple subjects, the course includes dairy science, agriculture, woodwork, metalwork, surveying, dressmaking, cookery, and laundry-work; and, realizing that the farmer also needs to have some knowledge of accounts, the directors of the course last year included a class in book-keeping, conducted by an expert. The dairy class last year performed individually a large number of experiments on the properties of milk, butter, cheese, and rennet, and on the causes and prevention of defects in the quality of these; and received lessons on such important subjects as the care, feeding, and physiology of the cow, and the manufacture of butter and cheese. They visited the Stratford Butter Factory and the Ngaere Cheese Factory, spending several hours at each, and taking careful notes on the various processes they observed. In the case of wood and metal work, the course pursued is chosen especially with a view to its practical utility on the farm. Instruction is given in mending common articles, and in making things in common use, in hammering out links for chains, in making, mending, and setting up wooden and iron gates, and so forth. The agriculture class during the past year conducted experiments on the effects of manures in common use on various pasture grasses, and on the spraying and pruning of fruit-trees. A good deal of time was devoted to work in the glasshouse, where grape-vines are in their second year, and much benefit was here derived from the instruction and advice of Mr. McMillan, a local amateur expert in viticulture, who kindly paid several visits to the school. On the principle that no man can