

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

AUCKLAND.

REPORT OF THE ACTING SENIOR INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

The district high schools in operation at the end of 1915, with the enrolment of the secondary departments, were as follows: Aratapu, 23; Cambridge, 12; Coromandel, 21; Paeroa, 34; Pukekohe, 21; Rotorua, 25; Tauranga, 26; Te Aroha, 9; Te Kuiti, 23; Waihi, 60; Normal, 17: total enrolment, 271. The aggregate enrolment shows an increase of fifty-one pupils on last year's total, but it has been found desirable owing to decrease in numbers to recommend the closing of the secondary department at Te Aroha.

A small percentage of the pupils in the various schools reach the Matriculation standard, the larger number qualifying for senior free places by passing the required departmental examinations.

The teaching throughout all the schools is, in general, marked by earnestness and intelligence, schemes of work are carefully and thoughtfully prepared, and the order and behaviour of the pupils are commendable. In five of the schools—namely, Te Aroha, Paeroa, Waihi, Cambridge, and Pukekohe—the full rural course is adopted, and in Rotorua and Tauranga work up to the standard of the rural course requirements, with the exception of woodwork and domestic science, is covered. Mr. J. P. Kalaugher, Supervisor of the manual and technical work, has in hand a scheme whereby it will be possible for nearly all the district-high-school pupils to cover the rural course.

In most of the schools the roll number is small, a fact due in some cases to the unfortunate inability of parents to realize the value of secondary education, and in others to the nearness of secondary schools which possess better equipment and a more liberal staff of teachers. In outlying centres the secondary department of district high schools serves a useful purpose, but in more thickly populated districts the establishment of a secondary school or of a technical high school would be calculated to better serve the educational needs of the community. The establishment of such a school at Paeroa would mean the closing of the secondary departments of Waihi, Paeroa, and Te Aroha District High Schools, but would lead to increased educational interest and consequent increased educational efficiency. Pukekohe is in an admirable position geographically for a technical high school, and a school if established there would serve the educational needs of the district stretching north to south from Papakura to Mercer and east and west from Bombay to Waiuku.

In the latter portion of the year fifteen district-high-school pupils from Paeroa and Cambridge attended at Ruakura Experimental Farm, and under the instruction of Mr. J. W. Hadfield, assisted by Messrs. Meredith and Crabbe, underwent a course of practical and theoretical work. The class was in every way a successful one, and the thanks of all concerned are due to the officers in charge of the experimental station for their kind assistance and loyal co-operation.

TARANAKI.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

In this district there is only one district high school, that at Stratford. To this school is attached a laboratory, woodwork-room, metal-room, and cookery-room. As these rooms have been fully equipped, the work in connection with the rural department, which has been made a special feature, has been carried out with marked success. Seventy-nine pupils out of a roll number of 170 have taken advantage of this course. For the other pupils to the number of ninety-one there has been arranged a general course to afford them means of passing those examinations which are the avenues to public occupations and professional careers. On the whole good methods of instruction have been employed, and that these have been applied with a very satisfactory amount of skill and thoroughness is evident by the success achieved by the candidates sent up for public examinations.

The work of the rural classes has been maintained on similar lines to those of former years and at a satisfactory standard of efficiency. There were in attendance during the year thirty-seven pupils in their first year, twenty-two in their second year, and twelve in their third year. As is usual at the school, all pupils who had completed one year's work sat for the Intermediate or equivalent examination. For the Senior National Scholarship there were four male candidates, and all these took as a subject for examination ironwork—a manual subject, included in the optional list for the first time this year. All the third-year pupils sat at the Public Service Senior Examination. Most of the pupils arrive by the 10 and leave by the 3 o'clock train. Their school week, therefore, consists of twenty hours. Approximately the groups of subjects taken and time devoted to each are as follows: English, six hours; arithmetic and mathematics, four hours; science, four hours; manual work, six hours. A noticeable improvement was made in the teaching of English during the year, and greater prominence was given to the literature of the language. In a closely settled farming district such as Stratford the most important work of the rural course, at least for boys, is undoubtedly the teaching of agriculture and dairy science. The appointment of Mr. Ellis as school instructor on these subjects has helped to put the treatment of the practical work on a more satisfactory basis. His know-