

Scholarships.—Senior National Scholarships were awarded to pupils of the following schools: Stratford District High School, 1; New Plymouth Boys' High School, 3. Junior National Scholarships were awarded to scholars from the following schools: New Plymouth Girls' High School, 4; New Plymouth Boys' High School, 1; Waitara, 1; Hawera, 1; Manaia, 1; Stratford, 1. The Bayly Memorial Scholarship was awarded to a pupil of the Stratford District High School, who, however, relinquished the scholarship in favour of a Junior National Scholarship. One pupil from the Stratford District High School was awarded a Junior University Scholarship, being third on the credit list, the boy's success being a pleasing proof of the high standard of secondary work in this district; another pupil secured second place on the credit list in the Senior National Scholarship Examination, passing the Matriculation Examination at the end of the third high-school year.

Teaching Staff.—The following are the numbers of the teachers, pupil-teachers, and probationers in the service of the Board at the end of the year:—

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Head teachers	39	22	61
Sole teachers	19	73	92
Assistants	13	112	125
Pupil-teachers	1	22	23
Probationers	4	19	23
	76	248	324

Buildings.—New schools have been erected at Awakino, Finnerty Road, Pukengahu, Tahora, and Te Wakarae; also, additions were made to the Tokirima and Otakeho Schools. The Stanley Road School, destroyed by fire in 1916, has been reinstated. The new school, having been erected on modern open-air principles, has attracted some notice outside the limits of this district. The Okato School has been completely renovated and practically rebuilt. At Tatu a new residence, containing four rooms, has been erected. Eighteen schools and fifteen residences have been painted during the year. The installation of a properly equipped workshop and plant has enabled the Board to undertake the manufacture of the whole of the required furniture and joinery, and has proved eminently satisfactory. As a matter of business, and in view of the uncertainty of obtaining supplies, the Board throughout the year carried a heavy stock of building-materials. The value of the building stock on the 31st December was £1,610. It may be mentioned that the Board found it necessary to incur very heavy expenditure on the maintenance and repair of school buildings in the southern portion of the district, in particular on the buildings taken over from the Wanganui Board.

Agricultural Instruction.—This section of the Board's activities made good progress, as evidenced by the desire for extension of instruction next year at practically all centres. The centres of instruction for farmers reached a total of forty, and in addition several classes in horticulture and orchard-work were formed in the larger centres. For the latter development good support was forthcoming, especially from ladies, and a further extension in this line is assured. A short course in agriculture, &c., at Easter was attended by the majority of teachers in the Board's service, and has already demonstrated its utility in increased interest and more co-ordinated effort throughout the district. A special feature is being made of improvements to grounds, and with this end in view some propagation has been done in the majority of schools, and in some of them a great deal. It is hoped that shortly each of our school-grounds will be a beauty spot, and an object of pride to pupils and teachers alike. The model dairy farm now in operation at Stratford is an important development so far as the future of agricultural instruction is concerned. The instructor stationed at that centre will be responsible for official records, and an increasing amount of instructional work will be taken there by rural pupils.

Technical Instruction.—During 1917 the day classes at New Plymouth continued to be carried on, the engineering and commercial classes being very large classes. The evening classes were attended largely by compulsory students, many of whom showed a strong desire to progress in their studies. At Hawera day classes were inaugurated, and proved most successful. The commercial class was the largest, and in it and the general class much good work was done. The evening class in general was well attended. At Stratford, where the compulsory class was not in operation, some good work was done in the various evening classes. It will be necessary for the School Committee at Stratford to seriously consider the advisability of asking the Board to bring this centre into line with regard to the compulsory attendance of boys. At Eltham the experiment was tried of carrying on a shorthand class for girls in the early morning instead of in the evening. Owing to the keenness of the employers and others who made efforts to enable the students to attend, the success of the venture was such as to engender the hope that ultimately these early classes will be generally adopted.

Manual Instruction.—Woodwork and cookery classes have been carried on at New Plymouth, Stratford, Hawera, Eltham, and Inglewood. In accordance with the policy that where possible the instruction should be carried to the children instead of *vice versa*, members of the Board visited Waitara and suggested to the School Committee that the residents of the town should raise sufficient funds to erect a building wherein woodwork and cookery might be taught. The idea was taken up with avidity, and the sum of £220 was collected. The school is now completed.

Secondary Instruction.—It is pleasing to note the increase of interest in secondary education in this district. The attendance at the Stratford District High School and the day technical classes at New Plymouth and Hawera centres show that parents in the Taranaki Education District are becoming fully alive to the advantage of secondary education. The average attendance of the