

OTAGO.

SIR,—

In accordance with the provisions of section 102 of "The Education Act, 1877," the Education Board of the District of Otago has the honor to submit a report of its proceedings for the year 1880. At the commencement of the year the Board was composed of the following members: Messrs. John Shand, William Elder, Alexander C. Begg, James Green, Keith Ramsay, Michael Fraer, James Fulton, Henry Clark, and Horace Bastings. Messrs. Fulton, Clark, and Bastings were in December balloted as the retiring members for the year. Seven candidates were nominated for the vacancies, and the voting by the School Committees resulted in the election of Messrs. Clark, Fulton, and Fergus. At the first meeting of the Board, as newly constituted, Mr. James Green was elected Chairman. There were held during the year eighteen meetings of the Board, ten meetings of the Finance Committee, and six meetings of the Appointments Committee.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.—The last report of the Board showed that there were in operation on the 31st December, 1879, 145 schools. During the year schools have been opened at George Street (Dunedin), Waikoikoi, Waibemo, Moonlight, Strath Taieri, Tabatika, and Hindon. There were thus 152 schools in operation in the district on the 31st December, 1880, being an increase for the year of seven schools. Four half-time schools (but reckoned as two schools) are included in this enumeration. There is only one aided or subsidized school. New schools have been sanctioned at Mount Stuart and Kurow. At present a large number of applications for the establishment of schools are under consideration, and in most of these cases the claims put forward are very strong.

TEACHERS, ETC.—There were employed on the 31st December 430 teachers, classified as follows: Male head teachers, 142; male assistant teachers, 41; male pupil-teachers, 54; female head teachers, 69; female assistant teachers, 28; female pupil-teachers, 77; teachers of sewing, 19: total number, 430. This statement shows an increase for the year of 55 teachers, being 9 schoolmasters, 15 schoolmistresses, 18 male pupil-teachers, 10 female pupil-teachers, and 3 teachers of sewing.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, ETC.—Tables showing the attendance at the different schools, the amount expended upon each school, and the name, status, and emoluments of each of the teachers, are given in appendices. The following is an abstract of the attendance at the public schools of this district from the institution of the Otago education scheme in the year 1856 to the present time:—

YEAR.	Number of Schools.	Number of Teachers.	Number of Pupils who attended at all in the course of the Year.			Average daily Attendance for the Year.			Attendance at the Close of the Year.		
			Dunedin.	All other Schools.	Totals.	Dunedin.	All other Schools.	Totals.	Dunedin.	All other Schools.	Totals.
1856-57 ...	5	7	115	121	236
1866 ...	51	71	1,193	2,754	3,947	888	1,680	2,568	934	2,136	3,070
1876-77 ...	165	329	3,094	15,256	18,350	2,067	9,143	11,210	2,378	11,159	13,537
1877 ...	173	356	3,191	16,422	19,613	2,176	9,573	11,749	2,585	11,943	14,528
1878 ...	*134	334	4,875	16,660	21,535	2,912	9,707	12,619	3,480	12,593	16,078
1879 ...	*145	375	5,433	18,472	23,905	3,317	10,562	13,879	3,961	13,823	17,784
1880 ...	*152	430	6,528	19,688	26,216	3,898	11,696	15,594	4,429	14,774	19,203

* Exclusive of Southland.

The attendance continues to advance rapidly. The numbers for the year show an increase in the average attendance of 1,715 over that of the previous year, and an increase of 2,311 in the number of children who attended at all during the year. These figures will explain and justify the numerous applications made to the Board in the course of the year for the enlargement of many of the smaller schools, and the establishment and erection of new ones in districts where settlement and population are increasing.

AGES OF THE PUPILS.—The following table shows the ages of the pupils who attended school during the last quarter of the years 1878, 1879, and 1880:—

	1878.				1879.				1880.			
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Per Cent.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Per Cent.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Per Cent.
Under 5 years ...	185	183	368	2	213	222	435	2 $\frac{3}{4}$	194	209	403	2
5 and under 7 years ...	1,700	1,587	3,287	20	1,942	1,774	3,716	21	1,993	1,849	2,842	20
7 " 10 "	3,058	2,860	5,918	37	3,200	3,049	6,249	35	3,474	3,340	6,814	35 $\frac{1}{2}$
10 " 13 "	2,555	2,386	4,941	30	2,831	2,547	5,378	30	2,992	2,857	5,849	30 $\frac{1}{2}$
13 " 15 "	700	667	1,367	10	870	849	1,719	9 $\frac{3}{4}$	991	913	1,904	10
Above 15 years ...	93	104	197	1	138	149	287	1 $\frac{3}{4}$	177	214	391	2
Totals...	8,291	7,787	16,078	100	9,194	8,590	17,784	100	9,821	9,382	19,203	100