

**GYMNASTIC APPARATUS AT SCHOOLS.**—Except a few of the sets first erected the apparatus is in fair repair. Apparatus at several schools require painting to preserve the wood. Teachers should feel it to be their duty to prevent unfair use of the apparatus, and to keep the children from climbing on the parts not practicable for safe use by them.

**THE GYMNASIUM.**—All the apparatus in the gymnasium is in excellent repair.

I have, &c.,

The Chairman of the Board of Education.

JAMES Q. WALKER,

Gymnastic and Drill Instructor to Public Schools.

### SOUTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

As required by clause 102 of "The Education Act, 1877," I have the honor to submit the general report of the Education Board of the District of South Canterbury for the year ending the 31st December, 1881.

**BOARD.**—At the beginning of the year the Board consisted of Messrs. Herbert Belfield (Chairman), Richard A. Barker, Samuel W. Goldsmith, Melville Gray, William B. Howell, George F. Lovegrove, William Postlethwaite, Edward Wakefield, and the Rev. George Barclay. In March Messrs. Belfield and Howell and the Rev. G. Barclay retired by rotation and were re-elected. At the first meeting of the Board held in April Mr. Herbert Belfield was re-elected Chairman. In June Messrs. Postlethwaite and Lovegrove resigned as members of the Board, and in July Mr. William J. Steward was elected in place of Mr. Lovegrove, and Mr. William M. Slack was elected in place of Mr. Postlethwaite. In September Mr. Howell resigned, and Mr. Robson B. Walcott was elected in his place. During the year twelve ordinary and three special meetings of the Board were held. The average attendance at the ordinary meetings was seven and at the special meetings four.

**NEW SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS.**—Schools have been opened at Gapes Valley, Geraldine Flat, Makikihi, Orari Bridge, St. Andrew's, and Timaru (side school); and new school districts have been proclaimed at Albury, Redcliff, Kingsdown, and Seaview. With the exception of St. Andrews and Timaru, where substantial buildings were erected, school work has been greatly retarded owing to the inability of the Board to provide buildings. Applications for new schools have also been received from Kakahu Bush, Waitaki North, Rangitata, Waimatiti Valley (northern suburb of Timaru), Sutherlands, Kerry Town, and Cannington, but the Board has been quite unable to meet these requests in a fairly liberal manner either as regards buildings or maintenance. At Geraldine Flat and Orari Bridge old buildings have been fitted up and the schools started; at Makikihi and Gapes Valley schools are being conducted in hired and unsuitable buildings; and at Albury, Redcliff, Kingsdown, and Seaview the residents were compelled to wait another year, as no temporary building of any kind could be obtained. The current year's grant for buildings, £3,300, was found to be utterly inadequate. On receipt of the grant the Board found that no part of their proposals could be carried out as intended. It had been decided to build schools and masters' houses in the districts of Gapes Valley, Makikihi, Redcliff, Kingsdown, Seaview, and Albury, at a cost of from £600 to £700 each. In these cases the Board have now decided to build small schools at a cost of £200 each, leaving extensions and masters' houses to be provided for out of future grants. The Board further intended to build new schools at Waimate and Temuka at an estimated cost of £3,000 and £2,000 respectively. All that could be done this year was to allocate a small sum in aid of buildings to be erected at some future time. Small additions will be made to the schools at Milford, Kakahu, and Waitohi Flat, but many necessary works in connection with other schools have of necessity been deferred. The current year's grant has thus been disposed of:—

	£
Six small schools, including furniture, apparatus, &c. ... ..	1,500
Grants in aid of buildings to be carried out at a future date at Waimate and Temuka, £500 each ... ..	1,000
Additions to schools at Milford, Waitohi Flat, and Kakahu ... ..	500
Insurance on school-buildings ... ..	175
General repairs and contingencies ... ..	125
	£3,300

The residents in districts requiring new schools, fully recognizing the Board's inability to do all that is necessary, have subscribed liberally to make their small schools fairly complete. At Redcliff, Makikihi, Kingsdown, and Albury, amounts varying from £50 to £100 have been subscribed; and at Seaview, in addition to subscribing a sum to start the school under the Board's "Aided Schools Regulations," the residents have purchased and transferred to the Board a site at a cost of £100, and have arranged to build a master's house at a cost of £350, on the understanding that it is to be taken over at valuation by the Board at a future date.

**MAINTENANCE.**—The heavy reductions in staff salaries and general expenditure enforced at the beginning of the year have had the effect of placing the Board's finances in a sound position. By careful management the Board is able to record a credit balance of £269 7s. 10d. on the General Maintenance Account. This represents the saving for the nine months from March to December, as at the former date, when the reductions came fully into force, the Maintenance Account was slightly overdrawn. The same relation of income to expenditure cannot, however, be relied on, as it is influenced by every variation in the attendance. The Board, while loyally carrying out the instructions of the Government in this matter, must at the same time protest that the statutory grant is inadequate for the efficient maintenance of our schools. The exercise of the greatest care in allotting salaries still leaves many of our teachers, especially assistants, insufficiently paid, and the sum that can be placed at the disposal of Committees for incidental expenses is so small as to lead to endless difficulties and unplea-