

OTAGO.

SIR,—

Education Office, Dunedin, 15th March, 1889.

In accordance with section 102 of "The Education Act, 1877," the Board of the Education District of Otago has the honour to submit the following report on the educational affairs of the district for the year 1888:—

BOARD.—At the beginning of the year the Board consisted of the following members: Hon. Thomas Dick, Messrs. John Mackenzie, Henry Clark, James Green, James Fulton, Michael Fraer, J. F. M. Fraser, Dr. Hislop, and Dr. William Brown. Dr. Brown and Messrs. Fraer and Fraser were the retiring members in terms of section 15 of the Act. Seven candidates were nominated for the three vacancies, and the voting resulted in the re-election of Dr. Brown and Mr. Fraer, and the election of Mr. John Macgregor in the room of Mr. Fraser, who declined being again nominated. At the first meeting of the Board in April Dr. Brown was re-elected chairman. On the 18th October Dr. Brown, owing to pressure of business, resigned his seat. An election was held to fill the extraordinary vacancy caused by Dr. Brown's resignation, when Mr. J. W. Jago was elected. At the meeting in November Mr. Henry Clark was elected Chairman. Dr. Brown and Mr. Fulton were re-appointed members of the Otago Boys' and Girls' High School Board, and Mr. Neil Fleming representative of the Board on the Waitaki High School Board. During the year the Board held fifteen meetings. There were twelve meetings of the Finance Committee, and twelve meetings of the Appointments Committee.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.—At the end of 1887 there were 183 schools in operation. In the course of the year new schools were opened at Lauder and Matau. The half-time schools of Wharekuri and Kurow, Eweburn and Kyeburn, have been erected into full-time schools. There were consequently 187 schools in operation in the district at the end of the year. During the year new schools were sanctioned at Matau, Tokaraki, Ratanui, and Lauder; and buildings were in course of erection in the three last-mentioned districts when the year closed. A greater number of memorials for the establishment of schools were considered by the Board during the year than in any previous year. Nearly all the applications, however, had to be declined, chiefly owing to the want of funds for the erection of the buildings.

TEACHERS.—Early in the year the Board informed all teachers who were not fully classified that they would be expected to obtain full certificates of competency at the next annual examination. It is satisfactory to find that all who held only partial certificates went up to the departmental examination last January, and that nearly all of them succeeded in obtaining a full pass. There is now no teacher in the Board's service who does not possess a certificate of some kind from the Minister of Education—nearly all are fully certificated.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—There were 148 pupil-teachers in the Board's service at the end of the year. The annual examination took place at the middle of December. The following table shows the number that sat at the examination, the number that passed, and the number that failed:—

	Presented.	Passed.	Failed.
First class	19	19	0
Second class	40	35	5
Third class	48	43	5
Fourth class	37	33	4

The services of six were dispensed with for failing twice to pass the examination for promotion to a higher class.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—Eighteen scholarships—ten senior and eight junior—were offered for competition at the end of the year, the examination being held on the 17th December and following days. Thirty-nine candidates entered for the senior, and seventy-five for the junior. In addition to the scholarships awarded by the Board, fifteen candidates obtained sufficient marks to entitle them to three years' free education at the Dunedin Boys' and Girls' High Schools. There are at present fifty-seven pupils receiving free education at the High Schools in connection with the scholarship scheme.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.—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. At the beginning of 1878 the new Education District of Southland was created, and thirty-seven schools were handed over to the newly-formed Board:—

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
1867	56	85	1,216	3,151	4,367	897	2,045	2,942	919	2,436	3,355
1877	173	356	3,191	16,422	19,613	2,176	9,573	11,749	2,585	11,943	14,528
1887	183	511	6,136	22,742	28,878	4,148	15,110	19,258	4,648	18,032	22,680
1888	187	513	5,802	22,779	28,581	3,925	15,038	18,963	4,315	18,108	22,423