

It is again to be stated that for only a very small proportion of those who offer themselves as applicants for pupil-teacherships can positions be found. For the last two years there have been fully five times as many candidates as there were positions to fill.

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 Pupils who attended at all in the Course of the Year.			Average Daily Attendance for the Year.			Attendance at the Close of the Year.		
	Number of Schools.	Number of Teachers.	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
1893	202	512	5,527	22,794	28,321	3,675	15,054	18,729	4,200	18,362	22,562
1894	206	521	5,416	24,369	29,785	3,706	15,559	19,265	4,128	18,425	22,553

The numbers for the year show an increase in the average attendance of 536 on that of last year, and an increase of 1,464 in the number that attended at all during the year. It will be seen from the foregoing table that the number of pupils attending the city schools is year by year falling off. This is accounted for by the circumstances that families are settling in the suburbs, where increased tramway facilities, lower rents and taxes, offer advantages which are not to be got within the city.

The number of Maori and half-caste children attending the schools in the district was as follows: Maoris—8 males, 8 females, half-castes living as members of Native tribes—13 males, 7 females, half-castes living among Europeans—20 males, 18 females. totals—41 males, 33 females. Number of schools in which there were Maori and half-caste scholars, 8.

INSPECTION.—All the schools were examined except one which was closed when the Inspector was examining in its neighbourhood, and nearly all were inspected. The few that were not inspected were closed when the Inspectors were working through the parts of the district in which they are situated, 22,444 children were presented for examination, of whom 14,495 were examined in one or other of the standard classes, 7,117 in the preparatory class, and 489 in what is now called Class X. Of those examined in the standard classes, about 88 per cent. passed the standards for which they were presented. The average ages at which the standards were passed are in Standards III., IV., V., and VI. lower by two months, and in Standard II. by three months, than those of the same classes in 1893. There is no change in the average age of Standard I. The number of children over eight years of age not presented for examination in Standard I. is 1,270. In most cases what appeared to be satisfactory reasons were assigned for their retention in the preparatory class.

Owing to his having accepted the position of Chief Inspector for the Auckland District, the Board, about the middle of the year, lost the valuable services of Mr. Petrie, who had spent the best part of his life in the interests of education in Otago. For nearly twenty-five years he laboured with unflagging industry and zeal to advance the cause of education in this district, and he has left behind him a record of able and honourable service. As soon as possible after Mr. Petrie's retirement the Board appointed Mr. W. S. Fitzgerald an Inspector.

To lighten the labour of examination the Board, at their meeting in May, instructed the Inspectors to discontinue the individual standard pass examination in Standards I., II., and III., and upon this basis the city and suburban schools were examined. In the meantime the department, by an Order in Council, directed that the standard passes in Standards I. and II. shall be assigned by head teachers and those of Standards III. to VI. by Inspectors. The Board thereupon withdrew its instruction to the Inspectors, and directed them to conduct the examination according to the new departmental regulations. This they at once did, and it will be observed from their report not only that the plan is working well, but that the Inspectors desire to see it extended to Standard III.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—Twenty-nine scholarships—fifteen junior and fourteen senior—were awarded at the December examination. In all, 161 candidates competed—fifty for the senior, and 111 for the junior, scholarships. Fifteen junior and eighteen senior competitors gained free education at the Otago Boys' and Girls' High Schools. There are at present sixty-eight pupils receiving free education at the High Schools under the scholarship scheme. The amount expended on scholarships was: Paid to holders, £1,234 11s. 2d.; examination expenses, £35 0s. 1d.; total, £1,269 11s. 3d.

SCHOOL OF ART AND DESIGN.—The classes were attended during the year by 323 students—94 teachers and pupil-teachers, 51 students in training, 95 students attending the day class, and 83 students attending the evening classes. The Board has during the year given a good deal of attention to this institution, and several alterations have been made in its working, and additions made to its staff, with the view of increasing its usefulness. The staff has been increased by the