

Euclid.—In Euclid the results were on the whole fairly satisfactory. The papers presented on the second course were very creditable; those in the two sections of the first course varied from very good to weak.

Algebra.—The papers submitted in this subject varied much, the general result being below that of last year. Two papers were good, three satisfactory, five fair, five moderate, and four weak.

JAS. GIBSON GOW, M.A., } Inspectors.
A. BELL, M.A., }

OTAGO.

SIR,—

Education Office, Dunedin, 30th March, 1901.

In accordance with the provisions of section 102 of "The Education Act, 1877," the Education Board of the District of Otago has the honour to submit the following report of the proceedings for the year 1900:—

BOARD.—At the beginning of the year the Board was composed of the following members: Messrs. John Macgregor, James Mitchell, William Snow, John McRae Gallaway, John J. Ramsay, Donald Borrie, Henry Harraway, James Sim, and Alexander Kyle. Messrs. Macgregor, Mitchell, and Snow retired in terms of section 15 of the Education Act. Seven candidates were nominated by the School Committees for the vacancies, and the voting in February resulted in the re-election of Mr. Mitchell, and the election of Mr. Thomas Mackenzie and the Rev. P. B. Fraser. In March Mr. Ramsay resigned his seat, and Mr. William Snow was elected to fill the vacancy. In May Mr. Gallaway resigned his seat, and Mr. William Nicolson was elected his successor. At the first meeting of the Board in April Mr. Harraway was elected Chairman.

The Rev. William Hewitson, B.A., and Mr. Ramsay were appointed members of the Board of Governors of the Otago Boys' and Girls' High Schools, and Mr. Donald Borrie was reappointed the Board's representative on the Waitaki High Schools Board.

Mr. Donald Borrie represents the Board as one of the Education Reserves Commissioners.

The Board held twenty-four meetings during the year.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.—At the close of 1899 there were 222 schools in operation in the district. No new schools were sanctioned or opened during the year. The number of schools in operation at the end of the year was 222. The following shows the classification of the schools according to their average attendance: Under 15 pupils, thirty-two; 15 and under 20 pupils, twenty-four; 20 and under 25 pupils, sixteen; 25 and under 50 pupils, seventy; 50 and under 75 pupils, twenty-nine; 75 and under 100 pupils, fourteen; 100 and under 150 pupils, ten; 150 and under 300 pupils, eleven; 300 and under 500 pupils, seven; 500 and upwards, nine. Total number of schools open at close of the year, 222. Number of aided or subsidised schools included in above, two.

TEACHERS.—There were in the Board's service on the 31st December 494 teachers, classed as follows: Heads of school, seventy-nine males; sole teachers, fifty-three males, ninety females; mistresses, seventy-nine; assistants, forty-seven males, fifty-three females; pupil-teachers, twenty-five males, fifty-six females; teachers of sewing, twelve females. This shows an increase of two sole teachers, and a decrease of two heads of schools, four assistants, one pupil-teacher, and nineteen teachers of sewing—a total decrease of twenty-four teachers. Regarding the decrease in the sewing teachers, it may be explained that at the beginning of the year the Board, through financial pressure, was obliged to revert to its former regulations, which provided that no such teacher would be allowed for a school having an average attendance below forty-one pupils. The readoption of this regulation entailed the dispensing with the services of more than half the number of sewing teachers then employed.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—There were eighty-one pupil-teachers (twenty-five male and fifty-six female) in the Board's service at the end of the year. The examination of applicants for employment as pupil-teachers was held in December, when sixty-nine candidates (four boys and sixty-five girls) presented themselves. Out of this number fifty-one (three boys and forty-eight girls) passed the prescribed tests, and three boys and eighteen girls received appointments. The Board has again to draw attention to the great disparity between the number of males and the number of females seeking admission through pupil-teacherships to the teaching profession in this district. Despite the fact that the annual salary of the male pupil-teacher is £10 more than that of the female, the candidates of the latter sex outnumbered the males this year by sixteen to one. In consequence of the dearth of male candidates a considerable number of appointments that should have been filled by males had to be conferred on females.

ATTENDANCE.—The average for the last two quarters of the year has shown a slight improvement, and there are indications that the attendance throughout the district, which for the past five years has declined to an alarming extent, has reached its lowest point, and will now show a distinct, though perhaps very gradual, recovery. The average attendance expressed as a percentage of the mean of average weekly roll for the four quarters was 86.9—that is to say, that of the 20,463 children on the school rolls 2,680 (or over 13 per cent.) were absent every school-day throughout the year. In 1899 the average percentage was 85.4, so that 1.5 per cent. represents the gain in regularity of attendance for the year just closed.

TRUANCY.—From the following statement an estimate may be gained of the work undertaken during the year for the suppression of truancy: Cases investigated, 534; notices served on parents or guardians under section 5 of "The School Attendance Act, 1894," 305; summonses served under section 5 of "The School Attendance Act, 1894," 2; orders of the Court obtained under section 5, 2; penalty summonses issued under section 7 of "The School Attendance Act, 1894" (dealing with parents or guardians of children who had not attended school the number of times