

the most important duties of his office. During the year I have carefully noted all the schools where rude and unmannerly behaviour was conspicuous, and, if necessary, I shall be prepared to furnish a list of them to the Board. A teacher cannot be held altogether responsible for the behaviour of his pupils when coming to or going from school, but for their conduct in the playground and in the precincts of the school he is and ought to be responsible. I have reason to fear that the responsibility is often lightly regarded, and that efficient superintendence is but seldom exercised over the playground during play-hours and intervals. This is undoubtedly a grave fault, and one that should certainly be brought under the notice of the Board's officers on their visits.

REGISTERS AND SCHOOL RECORDS.

The register of daily attendance is in nearly all schools carefully and punctually marked, but the other school records are sometimes little cared for. In two schools, the registers appear not to have been marked at all for a considerable time, or, if marked, were removed by the teachers (contrary to instructions), so that the annual returns could not be made out from official sources by their successors or the Committees. The schools in question were the Cambrian and Cardrona Schools, and the teachers Messrs. D. McP. Scott and Walter Rice. In a few other cases I have had to complain of carelessness, but they do not deserve public censure.

BUILDINGS.

During the year there has been a great demand for enlargements and improvements to established schools, and a considerable demand for new ones, but the scanty sum available for building purposes has prevented most of the urgent demands from being supplied. The abolition of fees on the 1st January, 1878, caused an immediate rush of pupils to the schools in all the larger towns and villages. The sudden and extraordinary increase in the attendance thus brought about, added to the practical stoppage of all enlargements and extensions for the past year, put a strain on our school accommodation which it has been wholly unable to stand. In the larger schools all the available rooms are crowded to excess, and, in a good many cases, numbers of pupils have been reluctantly turned away from the doors of the public schools. The straitened accommodation has been felt in Dunedin more than elsewhere, and no part of the Board's district is so inadequately supplied with schools as the metropolis. The pressure has been in part temporarily met by leasing halls and large rooms, and opening them as class-rooms in connection with the nearest school. In view of the circumstances of our larger towns, and particularly of Dunedin and suburbs, the clauses of the Act empowering Committees to make education compulsory must remain entirely inoperative until the Legislature has provided accommodation commensurate with the extraordinary increase in the requirements.

SCHOOL FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES.

In several old-established schools, the furniture has been greatly improved since my last report was written, and teachers and Committees exhibit greater anxiety to have comfortable and convenient seats and desks provided. The few new schools are in most respects suitably equipped. At my visits, I usually call the attention of the Committee to such articles of furniture as are urgently required, but these appeals have been so irregularly regarded that I would recommend that all school necessities, except firing, cleaning, and urgent repairs, be supplied by the Board on the report of an Inspector, or the application of a teacher. Nothing is more needed in the majority of schools than a roomy press with shelves, pigeon-holes, and a compartment for maps at one side. Here all maps, school records, and other documents should be kept. At present, maps, in particular, are rapidly worn out, owing mainly to the want of suitable places for their conservation. I may mention here that plans of 'presses' suitable for schoolrooms may be had by applying at the Board's office.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

The following reports on the grammar schools are extracts from those forwarded by me to the Headmaster and School Committee in each case. The examination of the Lawrence Grammar School was omitted, owing to the effects of a dangerous epidemic prevalent in the district for the last half of the year.

Oamaru Grammar School.

The following statement shows the extra subjects taken up by the more advanced pupils, and gives a brief estimate of the character of the work:—

Subject.	Class.	No. of Pupils.	Work done.
English	I.	18	Paradise Lost, III., 1-300; Macbeth, to end of Act II., Scene 3.
Latin	I.	3	Cæsar I., 1-29; Cicero, De Amicitia, 1-5.
"	II.	6	Principia Latina, I., and a few pages of II.
Elementary Physics	I.	18	Balfour Stewart's Primer, to page 76.
Euclid	I.	4	Books I.-IV.
"	II.	7	Book I.
Algebra	I.	4	To Ex. 26 (Todhunter).
"	II.	7	To Ex. 9 (Todhunter).