

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Principal	12	0	12
Head of department	0	12	12
Head of school	26	0	26
Sole teacher	47	26	73
Assistant	8	17	25
Pupil-teacher	9	39	48
	102	94	196

This staff would give one teacher to every thirty-five pupils in average attendance during the year. As, however, there have been twenty-two schools in operation in which the average was less than twenty-five—in ten, at least, very much less—and as there were forty-eight pupil-teachers in the service, the above statement with respect to the number of pupils under the care of each member of the staff must be considerably modified to indicate accurately the average work of the fully-qualified teacher

The position of sewing-mistress as a separate office has been abolished in this district, and in all schools not entitled to the services of a fully competent mistress the duties appertaining thereto have been relegated to female pupil-teachers, who receive a small annual allowance in return for a satisfactory performance of this work.

As noted in last year's report the proportion of uncertificated applicants for employment under the Board is decreasing. It is now the exception to appoint teachers to any but the very smallest schools who do not possess a departmental certificate of efficiency; indeed, it is open to question, in view of the large number of persons who annually qualify themselves for the work by passing the prescribed literary examination, whether the supply is not even now in excess of the actual demand.

Another noteworthy fact in this district, at least, is the annually-increasing proportion of females to males engaged in the work of teaching. In the year 1886 there were in this district 97 male and 64 female teachers of all classes. In 1888 these figures had increased to 102 and 73 respectively. For the past three years, however, the number of male teachers in the service has not increased, while the females now number 94. These figures would seem to indicate that during recent years the increasing requirements of this district for additional teachers are met by filling the vacancies with females. This doubtless arises from the fact that, as a rule, the female candidates, for the less important vacancies at least, are invariably better qualified by nature, experience, and literary attainments for the positions they seek. The Board has no reason to fear that an undue preponderance of female teaching-power will prove detrimental to the cause of education generally. It is a fact, on which this district may congratulate itself, that many of our smaller schools under the charge of female ex-pupil-teachers are excellently managed.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—The pupil-teacher system adopted by this Board works smoothly and well. For vacancies which occur from time to time there is no lack of candidates—indeed, the supply of female applicants for such employment is somewhat in excess of the Board's requirements. All appointments are made on the recommendation of the School Committee, approved by the head teacher of the school where the vacancy occurs. The latter being responsible not only for the work performed by the pupil-teachers, but also for their progress in study, it seems to the Board but reasonable that they should have some voice in the appointment, so far, at least, as the fitness of the appointee is concerned. It will thus be seen that the Board, endowed with sole power by the Act in this matter, deems it expedient to share with Committees and teachers the responsibility of making such appointments, and it is obvious that the chances of friction are thereby minimised. As a matter of fact, no case of serious diversity of opinion has occurred for many years, and in only one or two instances has it been necessary to determine the engagements of pupil-teachers before the expiration of their apprenticeship because of failure to pass the necessary examinations or of natural ineptitude for the work. The annual examination of pupil-teachers was held in June, as provided for in the Board's regulations, at which forty-one candidates presented themselves, two being granted exemption from attendance on account of ill-health. The following figures indicate the result of the work done: Class I.—10 presented, 9 passed, 1 failed. Class II.—8 presented, 7 passed, 1 failed. Class III.—11 presented, 11 passed. Class IV.—12 presented, 10 passed, 2 failed. total—41 presented, 37 passed, 4 failed.

The Board has reason to feel satisfied with the work performed by its pupil-teacher staff as a whole. The ranks of the adult staff are now to a large extent recruited, as, indeed, they ought to be, from those who have completed their apprenticeship in the subordinate position, and have acquired by experience and examination the necessary certificate of competency.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The annual examination of candidates for scholarships was held simultaneously with that for pupil-teachers. For the five scholarships annually open for competition to all scholars (whether attending public schools or otherwise) in the Southland Education District there were this year thirty-one competitors. Acting on the report of its Inspectors, the Board awarded two scholarships of the value of £20 each, and tenable for three years—one to George Black (Middle School) and the other to Robert Brownlie (South School). Invercargill and three scholarships of the value of £35 each, also tenable for three years, to John Taylor (Waikaia), Agnes Baird (Winton) and George Hamilton (Longbush). The first-mentioned declined to take advantage of benefits accruing from the distinction won by him, the Board therefore awarded the scholarship to John Fraser, the candidate next highest on the list. In addition to the foregoing, and in terms of No. 3 of its regulations, the Board was able to devote its surplus funds in awarding scholarships of the value of £20 each, but tenable for one year only to the four competitors next in order of merit. The names of scholarship-holders on the books of the Board now number seventeen, and to these a sum of £465 was paid during the year.

SCHOOL COMMITTEES.—The relations existing between the Board and the School Committees under its control have been generally of the most harmonious description. The latter have ever shown a disposition to co-operate with the Board in whatever tends to the educational well-being of the community. No serious differences of opinion as to the relative duties and responsibilities of