

Quarter ending	Number of Schools.	Number of Teachers.	Number on Rolls.	Average Working Attendance.			Yearly Average.
				Male.	Female.	Total.	
1878.							
31st March ...	16	56	2,467	930	814	1,744	1,753
30th June ...	16	59	2,458	897	754	1,651	
30th September ...	17	60	2,510	931	811	1,742	
31st December ...	17	56	2,666	1,005	872	1,887	
1888.							
31st March ...	49	119	4,704	1,895	1,785	3,680	3,674
30th June ...	49	120	4,689	1,921	1,784	3,705	
30th September ...	50	123	4,714	1,832	1,660	3,492	
31st December ...	50	125	4,703	1,964	1,857	3,821	
1895.							
31st March ...	62	147	5,221	2,257	2,160	4,417	4,455
30th June ...	65	151	5,265	2,277	2,150	4,427	
30th September ...	65	153	5,304	2,306	2,185	4,491	
31st December ...	65	153	5,331	2,309	2,178	4,487	
1896.							
31st March ...	65	163	5,429	2,286	2,171	4,457	4,559
30th June ...	65	151	5,373	2,399	2,225	4,624	
30th September ...	65	150	5,341	2,336	2,154	4,490	
31st December ...	65	149	5,322	2,402	2,257	4,659	

The working average for the four quarters gives 4,613 against the strict average of 4,557, whilst the average roll number for the year is 5,366 against 5,280 in 1895.

FINANCE.—The balance-sheet, duly certified by the Auditor-General, is herewith forwarded. The Building Account shows a debit balance of £1,533 0s. 1d., the building grant allocated to this Board last year not having been received in time to be credited in the accounts for the year ending the 31st December, 1896. The Maintenance Account shows a credit of £2,253 19s. 10d., or a balance credit in the bank of £720 19s. 9d.

BUSINESS.—The principal works executed by the Board during the year 1896 were the erection of a master's residence at Timaru South; additions to the Waitaki, the Kingsdown, Hazelburn, South Orari, and Waimataitai schools; repairs to the master's residence at Redcliff, &c.; painting schools and residences at Hunter's, Hilton, Kakahu Bush, and Belfield; whilst the schools at Winchester and Glenavy were also painted. Considerable repairs were executed to the Timaru Main residence, and the drainage; a concrete tank was built at Waimate; a well was sunk at Glenavy; the Washdyke residence was considerably repaired and improved; the fencing at Timaru South was repaired, and a large amount of new furniture was supplied to meet the growing requirements of the district, with other materials required by enlargements. In addition to these, grants were made to various School Committees, subsidizing their local efforts to keep things generally in efficiency and repair.

The Board has again to thank the School Committees throughout the district for the aid they have granted in the way of subsidies, as well as for the willing and intelligent assistance they have at all times rendered to the Board in all matters relating to the interests and discipline of their several schools, and for the general good feeling with which the administration of the Board has been received.

During the past year the Board, at the request of a large number of householders, raised the status of the Timaru Side School to an independent position under the name of the Timaru South School, appointing a headmaster and increasing the staff, to meet the requirements of the new and growing district.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—The annual examination of pupil-teachers was held in the last week in June, when forty pupil-teachers, together with sixteen candidates for employment, presented themselves for examination. Thirty-two pupil-teachers passed, and eight failed. Of the candidates for employment, twelve passed and four failed. Eleven pupil-teachers of the fourth year sat for certificates at the Education Department's examination; one passed the D, two obtained a "partial" D, one passed the E, and seven obtained a "partial" E. The first prize for drawing was won by James Ritchie, a second-year pupil-teacher.

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—A special report of the secondary work of the District High Schools was submitted to the Board by the Inspector. From this report it appears that thirty-three scholars took part in the examination at Waimate, and fourteen at Temuka. The subjects taken were English, French, Latin, Euclid, algebra, and trigonometry. The Waimate High School Board has continued its grant of £100 per annum towards the teaching of the higher subjects in the Waimate District High School; and, with their new scheme of scholarships and exhibitions, the Governors are bringing the advantages of a high-school education within reach of scholars from the surrounding country schools, and are encouraging their own town scholars to remain at school a longer time than they would otherwise be likely to do.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

W. B. HOWELL, Chairman.