

repairs. In these circumstances, therefore, the Board respectfully desires to urge upon the Minister the necessity of paying every regard to the requirements of the North Canterbury District, where the demands for repairs and replacements, owing to the natural and inevitable process of decay, are increasing at a rate almost beyond the Board's means to cope with. The total expenditure on buildings during the year was £8,545 5s. 2d.

On the morning of the 16th November, 1901, the northern districts were visited by an earthquake of unusual severity, causing much damage to the Board's schools, those in the Cheviot district having all the chimneys hopelessly wrecked and considerable injury done to the roofs. In order to in some degree restore confidence, and with the view of minimising as far as possible the interruption to school-work, the Board arranged for the immediate repair of the damage done. The Kaiapoi School, which is of brick, suffered considerable damage from the earthquake, the whole of the building being shaken from top to bottom, in addition to the havoc caused by the falling chimneys. The total cost of making good the damage done by the earthquake amounts to £952 4s. 11d., which sum it is confidently expected the Government will grant in addition to the Board's ordinary share of the vote for school buildings.

The number of schools in operation at the end of the year, including twenty aided schools, was 205.

MAINTENANCE.—The expenditure on teachers' salaries and allowances amounted to £55,320 19s. 5d., and the grants to School Committees, with other incidental expenses, to £6,579 5s., making a total of £61,900 4s. 5d. The working-average for the year was 16,559, but the average of the four quarters commencing with the December quarter of 1900, on which payments were based, was slightly less—viz., 16,553. The cost per head of teachers' salaries was therefore £3 6s. 10d., and the cost of maintaining the schools, including incidental expenses, £3 14s. 9d. per head.

TEACHERS.—The total number of teachers in the Board's service at the end of 1901 (besides 44 sewing-mistresses and 6 temporary part-time teachers) was 493. Of these, 205 (139 males and 66 females) were heads of schools or departments, or in sole charge; 182 (37 males and 145 females) were assistants; and 106 (18 males and 88 females) were pupil-teachers.

ATTENDANCE.—The net roll-number for the last quarter of the year was 19,638, and the average attendance 16,773, a percentage of 85.41.

NORMAL SCHOOL.—The number of students admitted to the Normal School during 1901 was 39 (including 17 of the second year)—viz., 11 males and 28 females. The Principal's report, which is appended, gives information as to the year's working of the training department.

Following upon its previous representations that there should be no diminution in the grant for the training of teachers, the Board in October of last year submitted to the Minister that the proposed capitation to Education Boards, under the Public-School Teachers' Salaries Act, would not be sufficient to enable the Board to meet the expenditure on its Training School, which should therefore be borne by the Department. The whole matter was subsequently brought into prominent notice by means of a strong deputation of Canterbury and Otago members of the House of Representatives, who, with Mr. Buddo and Mr. Hardy, waited on the Minister and urged that the existing training-schools should not suffer by the changes proposed under the Teachers' Salaries Act. The Board notes with pleasure Mr. Walker's assurance that there will be no difficulty in carrying on the training department, on the same lines as hitherto, without entrenching on the Board's general funds.

INSPECTION.—In their report the Inspectors make reference to the system of freedom of classification introduced some two years since—a system which as a whole appears to have worked well, and which is highly appreciated by the teachers, who have accepted the privileges and responsibilities bestowed upon them with a due regard to the standard of attainment required in the several subjects prescribed by the syllabus. The question of manual training as a means of education is exhaustively dealt with in their report, which dwells at length on the wide field open to teachers in the application of certain forms of manual training in connection with the ordinary subjects of primary education.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The annual examination for scholarships was held on the 16th December, 1901, and following days. One hundred and three candidates (55 boys and 48 girls) presented themselves for the junior scholarships, the number competing for those in the senior class being 25 (16 boys and 9 girls). Of the 103 candidates, 57 entered from schools defined as "country" schools and 46 from schools of the larger type. The 46 town candidates gained four of the twelve scholarships awarded, and the 57 country competitors the remaining eight. Of the latter, seven would not have been eligible to compete if the age qualification had not been in their favour; in which connection the Board now has under consideration a proposal to modify the regulations so as to lessen the handicap those interested in town schools allege their candidates are subjected to in regard to the additional year's age allowed with respect to children who enter from country schools. The Board's wish, it is almost needless to say, is to have both classes of competitors on an equitable footing, in order that a fair distribution of scholarships may be effected between the town and country schools, to which end the present regulations were framed some ten years ago.

GAMMAK SCHOLARSHIPS.—In accordance with intention expressed in its annual report of 1900, the Board has altered its Gammack Scholarship regulations, mainly in order that the awards shall not clash with those made to the winners of the New Zealand University junior scholarships. Under the old regulations it frequently happened that the successful candidates for Gammack scholarships also qualified for the University scholarships. This not only led to a good deal of uncertainty as to the awards, some candidates electing to hold Gammack scholarships and others those offered by the University, but was also responsible for a practice which has been referred to as "trafficking" in scholarships. But although it appeared desirable to make some alteration under which this practice would not be possible, the Board is of opinion that in cases where candidates have elected to forego Gammack scholarships the choice of a University scholarship has been made from