

Owing to the small number of male students admitted, we were obliged to place the Second Standard boys under female students. The satisfactory results obtained in that standard show that, under careful supervision, healthy, energetic female teachers may well be intrusted with the care of the lower classes of boys.

In October three students (whose studies had been carried on mainly at Canterbury College) sat for the Canterbury College first year examination and passed; and in January thirty-six were sent up for the D and E examinations, of whom thirty-five have passed wholly or partially, one of them taking second prize in science.

One gratifying feature of the year's work is to be found in the freedom from the additional expense often incurred through long absences on sick-leave on the part of students. This may have been a mere chance, but, in view of the large bill annually paid by the New Zealand Boards to substitutes for teachers on sick-leave, it may be worth noting. Probably, however, even if there should be a real improvement in this respect in the case of students whose homes are in Christchurch—so as to place them more on a level as regards health with teachers in other countries—we must expect some ill-health in the case of those who have to come away from home and meet the year's expenses out of £30.

Mr. W. A. Robinson, B.A., the part-time lecturer, entered upon his duties at the beginning of February, and at the end of the year it was a source of gratification to me that the Board was able to engage him for a further term of service.

In pursuance of the scheme by which students now depend solely on the Normal School course for preparation in all the subjects (except drawing) for the D certificate, we have this past year undertaken the teaching of the D science. In previous years, students have not had an opportunity of doing practical work in this subject; but this year an endeavour has been made to give the male students some small amount of practical work as well as tuition. Our limitations of time and expense are such that we cannot claim to have done much in this respect, and this is a circumstance that I regret, for to my mind it seems that if the science course of the standards is to be intelligently taught—if it is to be something more than mere book-work, and to be made one of the means of preparation for technical training—it is advisable that those who are to be masters in our schools should pass through a course of practical work in this subject.

In the Practising School and the Model School the work has gone steadily along, and the Boys' School has again been very successful in the scholarship examination.

I have, &c.,

EDWIN WATKINS, B.A.,

Principal of Normal School.

The Chairman of the Normal School Committee.

## SOUTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Timaru, 31st March, 1897.

I have the honour to submit herewith the report of the Education Board for the District of South Canterbury for the year ending the 31st December, 1896.

**BOARD.**—At the commencement of the year the Board consisted of the following members: Messrs. Melville Gray, J.P., William Barker Howell, J.P., John Talbot, J.P., John Jackson, J.P., Robert Henry Pearpoint, J.P., T. R. Seddon, George Henry Graham, J.P., the Rev. Joseph White, and the Rev. George Barclay, J.P. The three members retiring by rotation in March were Messrs. Howell, Graham, and White. Six candidates were nominated by the School Committees to fill these vacancies: Messrs. Howell, Salmond, Keddle, Graham, White, Sinclair. Messrs. Howell, Salmond, and Keddle were elected. In June Mr. R. H. Pearpoint resigned his seat on the Board, and three candidates were nominated to fill this extraordinary vacancy, namely: Messrs. Moore and Graham, and the Rev. Stanley Hinson. The election resulted in the return of Major Walter Montague Moore, J.P. In September the Board was called upon to deplore the untimely death of Mr. T. R. Seddon; and Messrs. R. H. Rhodes and William Kelland, and the Rev. W. J. Comrie were nominated to fill the vacancy. The election resulted in the return of the Rev. W. J. Comrie. Eighteen meetings of the Board were held during the year, the day of meeting being the second Wednesday in each month at 11.15 a.m., the number present at each meeting being on the average for the year 5.9. Two members—Mr. John Jackson and the Rev. George Barclay—went home on leave, each for six months. At the meeting in April Mr. William Barker Howell, J.P., was elected Chairman of the Board. The officers of the Board were the same as last year.

**SCHOOLS.**—At the end of the year there were sixty-five full-time schools in operation, the classification of which was as follows: Under 25 pupils, twelve schools; under 50 pupils, thirty-three schools; under 75 pupils, eight schools; under 100 pupils, four schools; under 150 pupils, two schools; under 300 pupils, two schools; under 500 pupils, three schools; above 500 pupils, one school. Number of aided schools included, twelve. There were Native or half-caste scholars attending at two schools—Waihao and Glenavy.

**ATTENDANCE.**—The accompanying table shows the number of scholars attending the Board's schools since the formation of the Board:—