

a knowledge of the exact amount of contributions they could depend upon monthly. They, accordingly, made an urgent appeal to Australia and New Zealand to contribute £75,000 per month, or food equivalent to that amount. On a population basis New Zealand's share of this worked out at about £15,000 per month. A conference was immediately convened of patriotic associations and the St. John Ambulance Association. At that conference, presided over by His Excellency the Governor, and held in Wellington, the following resolutions were passed: "(1) That the Government be recommended to make a definite grant of £5,000 per month, and, in addition, to subsidize at the rate of £1 for £1 all voluntary subscriptions up to any amount, not exceeding £5,000 per month, raised in New Zealand for the relief of the Belgian nation; (2) that voluntary subscriptions be asked for on a population basis; (3) that a central authority be appointed by the Minister of Finance for dealing with the transmission of all gifts, both in money and kind, for relief of the poor in the United Kingdom and Belgium; (4) that all donations in money for Red Cross purposes be sent direct from the centres of the Association of St. John in the Dominion to the headquarters in London. Further, that the above-mentioned authority, appointed by the Minister of Finance, should be available for making all arrangements in connection with the transmission of other gifts contributed in New Zealand for Red Cross purposes, which in the first instance should be sent to the various centres of the Order of St. John, in accordance with the working arrangements arrived at between the Association of St. John and the Red Cross Society in the United Kingdom." These resolutions were given effect to by the Government as from the 1st April. In addition, the Government decided that all moneys and gifts of clothing, produce, &c., for relief purposes should come through this same central authority in Wellington, so that the people of the Dominion might ultimately know the total amount of subscription given to meet the great needs for assistance not only of the Belgians, but also of the Serbians and Montenegrins.

It is difficult to accurately ascertain the amount of money and the value of the gifts which had been forwarded prior to the date when the Government took over the work of dealing with the relief funds, but from information so far furnished the amount transmitted to London in money and in kind up to the 31st March last was approximately £237,267. This was entirely apart from contributions for war purposes.

NEW ZEALAND HOSPITAL SHIP.

A most generous response was also made to His Excellency the Governor's appeal for funds for the New Zealand hospital ship. A sum of no less than £80,400 has been contributed, of which £48,706 is in the hands of the Government, the balance being still retained by local committees.

EDUCATION.

As forecasted in the Financial Statement of last year, a substantial increase is shown in the current year's estimates, apart from the increase naturally consequent on the expansion of population. This increase is in the main due to the further provisions that have been made for the staffing of the public primary schools and secondary schools, and for the higher rates of salary payable to the teachers employed.

In the amount to be provided for the salaries of public-school teachers an increase of £90,000 is shown, of which £30,000 may be set down as the increase that would naturally have been made in the ordinary development under unamended conditions.

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND.

The income during the year ended the 31st December, 1914, was £78,626, made up as follows: Contributions of members, £49,309; interest on outstanding contributions, £519; interest from Public Trustee, £11,798; Government subsidy, £17,000. The expenditure for the year was £41,061. The value of the fund on the 31st December, 1914, was £302,701, as against £265,136 on the 31st December, 1913, an increase of £37,565. The number of contributors increased from 4,017 on the 31st December, 1913, to 4,269 at the end of 1914, an increase of 252.