

*Open-air Classes.*—A number of schools the grounds of which, as regards aspect and shelter, are favourable for the instruction of classes in the open air have been supplied by the Board with seats and desks for this purpose. At these schools some of the work of every class is taken daily in the open air, except in stormy weather.

*School-sites.*—The Board again appeals to the Department to grant the full cost of necessary additions to school playing-areas, also to make, by the timely purchase of suitable school-sites, provision for school extension in rapidly growing districts.

*Certificates.*—1,290 proficiency certificates and 170 certificates of competency in S6 were granted. Owing to the influenza epidemic these passes were awarded (without special examination) after a conference between the Inspectors and head teachers. About 80 per cent. of the pupils received proficiency and 10½ per cent. competency certificates.

*School Libraries.*—The Board is pleased to report that during the year fifty-four School Committees applied for and received subsidies on local contributions for the provision of approved books for the school library and pictures for the school-walls. Thirty book-cases were supplied free by the Board. The subsidies amounted to £110 17s. 8d., and the book-cases cost £145 7s., so that the Board's contribution for this purpose out of its General Fund was £246 4s. 8d. It is the Board's desire that School Committees shall take full advantage of the facilities which, by its library-subsidy scheme, it offers for the provision of interesting and instructive reading-matter for the school pupils.

*Teachers' Medical Certificates.*—Under the existing regulations it is necessary for a teacher, at his own expense, to provide at least two, and in many cases three, satisfactory medical certificates—one before appointment as a junior teacher or probationer, one when he seeks admission to the Training College, and one before his teacher's certificate is issued to him. In other branches of the Public Service one certificate suffices. While not advocating that for teachers all medical examinations except the initial one should be dispensed with, the Board thinks that the expense of any subsequent examinations deemed necessary should be borne by the State, and recommends accordingly.

*Week-end Training-classes.*—Although it is not compulsory for junior teachers and probationers employed in country schools to attend classes in Dunedin in drawing, singing, science, and physical instruction, it is certain that they cannot obtain satisfactory instruction in some of these subjects in any other way. The Board is of opinion that under the circumstances these young teachers have a fair claim for a monetary allowance to meet their lodging-expenses in Dunedin on Friday nights.

*Hot Lunches for School-children.*—The Board has commended to School Committees the suggestion of the Minister that lunches brought from home by school-pupils be supplemented by hot soup, milk, or cocoa, and it understands that a number of schools have made a beginning in the direction desired. The chief difficulty will, no doubt, be found to be the financial one. The supplementary allowance granted by the Department for incidental expenses, from which it was suggested portion of the cost might be taken, will, it is stated, be quite inadequate to meet the necessary outlay, and unless the parents are willing to contribute the major portion of the cost the provision of the hot drinks referred to will be restricted to a small number of schools. Again, in the larger schools preparation of the hot drinks necessitates the extra service of the janitor or the janitor's wife, which means additional cost; and the serving-out entails the assistance of the teachers on the staff for a considerable portion of the midday recess, with the result that all of them have to sacrifice their lunch-hour on some days of the week. If the preparation, serving out, and clearing up are undertaken wholly by the senior girls, the lesson-time or the lunch-hour are for them considerably curtailed, and to this their parents are naturally not ready to assent. These are some of the difficulties which the Board foresees in connection with the scheme promulgated by the Minister; but, recognizing the beneficial results that will undoubtedly flow from it if inaugurated and administered in a liberal fashion, the Board is prepared to co-operate as far as lies in its power. It does not, however, believe that, under present conditions, the provision of meals of even a meagre character is possible at the larger schools.

*Minimum Qualifications for Junior Teachers and Probationers.*—The Board thinks that some modification of the new regulation eliminating the proficiency certificate as a qualification for the appointment of junior teachers is advisable. There are quite a number of promising applicants from country schools who have no opportunity of obtaining a higher examination status than the proficiency certificate, and who will thus be shut out from the teaching profession. A discretionary power might be given to Inspectors of Schools to recommend for these appointments suitable country pupils holding proficiency certificates.

*Increase in Teachers' Salaries.*—The Board conveys its hearty congratulations to the Minister on the success which has attended his efforts to provide higher emoluments for all classes of primary-school teachers. Rightly considered, the teacher is the most influential of all public servants, and his remuneration should be proportionate to his essential value to the State.

*School-books and School Stationery.*—For years past the books and drawing-books authorized for use in the schools of this district have been listed and lists furnished to the schools. Before the Minister's intimation of his intention to establish a central store for the purchase of school stationery was received the Board had decided upon recommending head teachers to compile, at suitable times or when necessity arises, lists of books required by the pupils, and send the lists in one order to a bookseller in Dunedin, first collecting the money from the pupils. The prices at which these school orders can be filled in Dunedin (cash with order) is being ascertained, and the Board will state to the teachers the lowest prices and the name of the bookseller quoting these prices. It is further considering the desirability of standardizing exercise-books and scribbling-pads, and adding them to the list mentioned above, giving stationers reasonable time to dispose of their stocks.

*Physical Instruction.*—The Department's scheme of physical exercises has formed part of the course of instruction of all schools in the district.