

Ages and Standards.—The totals in the various classes were : Class P, 7,072 (31·9 per cent.) ; Standard I, 3,026 (13·6 per cent.) ; Standard II, 2,712 (12·2 per cent.) ; Standard III, 2,745 (12·4 per cent.) ; Standard IV, 2,668 (12 per cent.) ; Standard V, 2,279 (10·3 per cent.) ; Standard VI, 1,660 (7·5 per cent.) ; Standard VII, exclusive of secondary pupils of district high schools, 30 (0·1 per cent.).

There were on the rolls at the end of the year 11,560 boys and 10,699 girls ; total, 22,259. The percentages were : Boys, 51·9 ; girls, 48·1. The proportion of boys to girls remains practically unchanged from year to year. In the secondary classes there were 111 boys and 157 girls ; total, 268 ; the percentage being 41·4 boys and 58·6 girls.

Teachers.—On the 31st December there were in the Board's service 752 teachers, classified as under :—

| | Males. | Females. | Total. |
|---|--------|----------|--------|
| Head teachers | 103 | 3 | 106 |
| Sole teachers | 28 | 117 | 145 |
| Assistant teachers | 67 | 258 | 325 |
| Total of adult teachers | 198 | 378 | 576 |
| Pupil teachers | 29 | 55 | 84 |
| Probationers | 11 | 45 | 56 |
| Teachers of needlework | .. | 12 | 12 |
| Manual and technical (special teachers) | 14 | 10 | 24 |
| | 252 | 500 | 752 |

The ratio of male teachers to female teachers employed in Otago has been for the past two years :—

| | Adult Teachers. | Pupil-teachers and Probationers. |
|--------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1918 | 100 males to 224 females. | 100 males to 241 females. |
| 1919 | 100 males to 191 females. | 100 males to 250 females. |

During the year the Board made 165 appointments of adult teachers. Sixty pupil-teachers and probationers were admitted to the service, of whom one had passed the D certificate examination, one had obtained partial D, twenty-one had passed the Matriculation Examination, six held partial matriculation, one held a lower leaving certificate, and thirty had passed the Intermediate or Public Service Entrance Examination.

Finance.—The main items of expenditure are shown below in comparison with the figures for the previous year :—

| | 1918. | 1919. | Increase or Decrease. |
|---|--------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. |
| Teachers' salaries and lodging-allowances | 108,935 13 8 | 139,343 2 6 | Inc. 30,407 8 10 |
| Payments to School Committees for incidental expenses | 7,498 13 4 | 9,419 9 8 | Inc. 1,920 16 4 |
| School buildings, purchase of sites, manual and technical buildings and apparatus | 18,344 9 9 | 18,254 15 2 | Dec. 85 14 7 |
| Administration | 3,134 16 8 | 3,508 17 10 | Inc. 374 1 2 |

The war bonus paid to teachers amounted to £5,020 2s. 8d. ; conveyance and board of children amounted to £2,806 17s. 7d. The expenditure on school buildings included : General maintenance, repairs, alterations, small additions and rents, £13,299 11s. 2d. ; new buildings, £2,484 11s. ; purchase of sites, £1,650 15s. 2d. ; manual and technical purposes, £784 17s. 10d. At the 31st December, 1918, the net balance to credit was £25,978 12s. 5d. ; the total receipts for the year amounted to £220,973 13s. 10d., and the total payments to £221,195 16s. 11d. The net balance to credit at the 31st December last was £25,756 9s. 4d.

District High Schools. [See E.—6, Report on Secondary Education.]

School of Art. [See E.—5, Report on Technical Education.]

Junior and Senior National Scholarships.—There were from this district 247 competitors for Junior and 133 competitors for Senior Scholarships ; thirty-four juniors (or 13·7 per cent.) and sixteen seniors (or 14 per cent.) were successful in gaining scholarships. Of the 221 Junior Scholarships awarded in the Dominion, Otago candidates gained 15·3 per cent., and of the 121 senior scholarships awarded, Otago candidates gained 13·2 per cent. Of the 130 scholarships current at the end of 1919, ninety-five were juniors and thirty-five were seniors ; thirty-six were held by girls and ninety-four by boys. The principals of the secondary schools they attended reported favourably regarding the conduct, diligence, and progress of all of them. The Board deems it desirable again to record its opinion that holders of Government scholarships should not be permitted to attend private schools during the tenure of their scholarships.

Inspection of Schools.—In the report of the Inspectors of Schools their estimate of the efficiency of the schools is shown as follows : Excellent or very good, 28 per cent. ; good, 40 per cent. ; satisfactory, 27 per cent. ; fair to inferior, 5 per cent. Compared with the results for the previous year the figures show a slight decrease in efficiency, but this is reasonably accounted for by the absence of pupils owing to the prevalence of influenza, and also to the great number of changes, especially in the country schools, which took place during the year. The Inspectors note with regret that a large number of children still leave school before passing S6, and also that retardation of pupils in S1, though to some extent diminishing, is still resorted to by teachers to a greater extent than in their opinion is justified. They recommend teachers to make more use of the school excursion or class walk, and the frequent visiting of public libraries, picture-galleries, and museums by the teacher and his class. Reference is also made by them to the improvement noticeable in the environment of many of the schools by the planting of ornamental trees and shrubs supplied from the Training College garden. They express their belief that staff conferences, having for their object the interchange of ideas between the head teachers and their assistants, are less frequent and more perfunctory than they should be.