

*School-books and Stationery.*—Although provision is made for the free supply of class-books in necessitous cases, and in cases where parents who have purchased new books for their children remove to another district, the Board is strongly of the opinion that the purchase of all school material should be made by the Department in bulk from the manufacturers and sold at cost price to Education Boards. Early in 1919 the Department intimated that the Minister of Education was considering the question of the establishment of a central store for the purchase of supplies of school stationery and for distribution of such stationery to schools, but so far no progress seems to have been made in the matter. The Board trusts that the proposal will not be lost sight of.

*Medical Inspection.*—Previous to 1919 the Medical Inspector had charge of the combined districts of Otago and Southland, with the result that only a few of the large schools were visited. In 1919 a Medical Inspector was appointed for the district, who, accompanied by the Department's School Nurse, was able to visit all the principal schools, and there has been considerable extension of this sphere of work. Evidence is not wanting that the importance of medical inspection of school-children is recognized by parents.

*Physical Instruction.*—Towards the end of the year the Department appointed a physical instructor for Southland. Previously Otago and Southland were combined for the purpose of physical instruction. Regular instruction in physical drill is now given in most of the schools of the district, and the instructor reports that in the majority of schools the exercises are faithfully carried out. During the month of September, training classes in physical instruction were conducted by the Department's physical instructors. The classes were open to all pupil-teachers, probationers, assistant teachers, sole teachers, and head teachers who had not previously attended such a course. In the case of pupil-teachers and probationers attendance was compulsory. Seventy-seven teachers attended the classes, and all entered with zeal and enthusiasm into the spirit of the training.

*Instruction of Teachers.*—Saturday classes for the training of teachers were arranged by the Board as usual, but after being at work for only nine weeks the classes had abruptly to cease in consequence of the coming into operation of the restricted railway service. This enforced break seriously interfered with the work of the classes, as even by continuing practically right up to the Christmas vacation immediately the normal train service was resumed, it was impossible to get in more than nineteen weeks' instruction instead of the usual twenty-six. The subjects in which instruction was given and the roll-number in each case were as follows: Drawing (three classes), 73; vocal music (three classes), 36; needlework (two classes), 51; hygiene (two classes), 50; agriculture (two classes), 42; school method, 15; mathematics, 10; English, 9; cardboard-work 26. Drawing classes for pupil-teachers and probationers were also held on two afternoons a week for a period of forty weeks, the average attendance being eighteen.

*Certificates.*—809 pupils were presented for examination in the subjects of the Sixth Standard. Of these 537 gained proficiency certificates, 135 gained competency certificates (five being endorsed), while 137 failed—percentages of 66·3, 16·7, and 17 respectively.

*Buildings.*—All building operations, maintenance, erection of new schools, erection of additions to school buildings and residences, have been carried out by the Board's staff of workmen, as was done last year. During the year a new school has been erected at Makarewa, and additions to schools at Waituna, Clifton, Waimumu, and St. George. The works now in hand are: Erection of new schools at Winton, Glenham, and Invercargill South; additions to Don Street Manual School, Invercargill, Technical College engineering workshop, and to schools at Waikiwi, East Gore, Bluff; and the erection of a new residence at Tuatapere. In addition to the foregoing works, necessary repairs to and painting of existing buildings have been carried out.

*Financial.*—The cash balance on the 31st December, 1918, was £4,340 4s. 4d. During the year the receipts from all sources, including the balance from last year, amounted to £126,273 19s. 4d., and the actual expenditure to £125,020 5s. 7d. The cash balance on the 31st December, 1919, was £1,253 13s. 9d. In last year's report reference was made to the fact that the rebuilding account would have to be largely drawn upon this year to replace the worn-out school building at Winton and to re-erect the Makarewa School. The cost to date of the re-erection of the Makarewa School is approximately £2,300, the grant from the Government being only £1,218. The difference, £1,082, has to be taken from the rebuilding account. In the case of the Winton School the Department has promised to consider the question of a grant in aid of this work when the building is completed and the detailed statement of the cost is submitted. Although the cash balance on the 31st December, 1919, is considerably less than the amount available on the 31st December, 1918, it is to be pointed out that a sum of over £2,000 due by the Department was not received until January, 1920.

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The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

J. C. THOMSON, Secretary.