

table shows the number of schools in operation at the end of each year given, also the number of children on the rolls, the number in average attendance, and the percentage of attendance :—

Year.	Total of Schools.	On Roll at End of Year.	Average Attendance.	Percentage of Attendance.
1880	185	23,086	16,412	71.1
1900	335	27,930	23,806	81.6
1919	381	35,138	31,854	90.6
1920	380	35,370	29,761	85.1

It will be seen that, as compared with the previous year, the percentage of attendance fell from 90.6 to 85.1. This decrease was the result of the widespread epidemic that prevailed among the children during the greater part of the year.

Maintenance.—The total expenditure on salaries for the year 1920, including £5,105 11s. 3d. house allowances, £13,132 10s. 1d. for relieving teachers, and £1,716 18s. 4d. for organizing teachers, was £259,978 4s. 10d. This amount was exclusive of £9,006 3s. 7d. paid to teachers in secondary departments and £16,115 16s. 2d. to training-college students, making a grand total of £285,100 4s. 7d. by way of disbursements in salaries and allowances. The incidental allowances paid to School Committees amounted to £14,303 13s. The following table shows the expenditure on salaries, allowances, and incidentals for each year mentioned :—

Year.	Salaries and Allowances.	Incidentals.	Totals.	Average Attendance.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
1880	55,318 17 8	8,071 12 2	63,390 9 10	16,412
1900	70,978 18 7	8,064 13 10	79,043 12 5	23,806
1919	213,461 10 11	13,923 12 1	227,385 3 0	31,854
1920	285,100 4 7	14,303 13 0	299,403 17 7	29,761

School Staffs.—There were 990 teachers in the Board's service at the end of 1920. Of these, 384 were head teachers or in sole charge, 482 were assistants, and 124 pupil-teachers. There were in addition eighty-six probationers, also twenty-eight sewing-mistresses in small schools in charge of male teachers.

Conveyance of School-children.—The expenditure on the conveyance of children to school was £4,719 10s. 10d., and on the board of children living a long way from the nearest school £606 15s. In all, 1,333 children were conveyed to school during the year, whilst board allowance was paid in respect of 113 children. Of the total (£5,326 5s. 10d.) paid in respect of conveyance and board, the Department refunded £5,126 19s. 3d., leaving the sum of £199 6s. 7d. to be found by the Board out of its ordinary capitation grant.

Scholarships.—There were 345 candidates (boys, 182 ; girls, 163) for the Junior National Scholarships. Of these, twenty-six qualified (eighteen boys and eight girls). It is worthy of note, and a matter to which the Department's attention should be drawn, that of those who qualified eight came from the large primary schools and eighteen from district high schools or secondary schools, there being no successful candidate from a sole-charge school. The number of candidates for Senior National Scholarships was 139 (ninety-one boys and forty-eight girls). Of these, fourteen (ten boys and four girls) qualified.

Finance.—Taking into consideration the whole of the accounts, the Board's balance-sheet shows that up to the 31st December, 1920, there was a drift of about £2,000 in the finances during the year. The accounts in which the principal losses have occurred are the Buildings Maintenance and New Buildings. The Board has also expended out of its General Account a sum of approximately £600 on sanitary and water services, &c., not recoverable from the Department. In view of the extraordinarily high cost of material and labour, coupled with the fact that grants have not been increased in proportion, the setback was to be expected. The sum of £835 8s. 10d. was transferred from the General Account to special accounts to wipe out deficits that had accrued during the year. While the financial standing of the Board is beyond question, there is a call for careful scrutiny of all transactions, and economy and judicious operation of the respective funds will be imperatively necessary.

Manual and Technical Instruction.—The past year has been one of the most important in the history of the Board as far as the development of manual and technical education is concerned. The work has had a great fillip, principally due to the fact that the Government more than ever is beginning to realize the value of this important branch of education, and legislation has been introduced which allows more liberal treatment in the way of providing capitation grants, increases in salaries, grants for buildings, material, apparatus, &c. A series of epidemics in all parts of the district militated against the attendances, and thus interfered with the continuity of the work. Some form of elementary handwork was taken up at all the Board's schools, with an attendance of 28,500 pupils during the year. At thirty-five schools, having no female teacher on the staff, instruction in needlework was given by special sewing-mistresses. Advanced handwork again received due attention, but it is to be regretted that only a small proportion of the pupils in the district can receive instruction in woodwork and cookery, owing to lack of facilities.

Teachers' Classes.—Teachers' classes have again been conducted at Christchurch, Greymouth, and Timaru, and correspondence classes have been carried on for teachers in the remote parts of the