

systems of dealing with the first-named class, by placing the feeble-minded boys in an institution separate from the older boys of the same type, and by the establishment in the large centres of special classes for the instruction of children who are partially deaf or whose speech is defective. For some time the Department has had under consideration the amendment of the Acts regarding child welfare, with the view of making better provisions for dealing with children requiring aid and protection, and it is proposed to submit legislation on the matter this session.

Reforms of curricula and improvements in the instruction will be of little value unless first of all the physical well-being of the children is secured. Steps have accordingly been taken to improve and extend the medical and dental services, which during the year were transferred to the control of the Health Department. The numbers of School Medical Inspectors and nurses have been increased, and arrangements are being made with the Hospital Boards for free treatment of children in necessitous cases—treatment that is being gradually more and more availed of. School dental clinics are already in operation; and a number of dental nurses are being specially trained in the treatment of children's teeth, and as these nurses complete their training the school dental system will be extended to other districts. It is hoped to develop gradually the school medical and dental work until it reaches all the schools, and the health of every child will be specially cared for.

#### VALUATION DEPARTMENT.

During the financial year ended 31st March, 1921, district valuation rolls for forty-eight districts were revised under the Valuation of Land Act, the number of separate properties inspected and revalued being one hundred and fifty thousand. The number of special valuations made for stamp-duty and death-duty assessment, for determining the prices paid for acquiring the freehold of Crown lands under the Land Laws Amendment Act, for assessing the value of Native lands in connection with applications for alienation, and for the purpose of advances on mortgage from the State lending Departments, approximated ten thousand.

The provisions of the Valuation of Land Amendment Act, 1920, relating to the constitution of the Assessment Court, became operative on the 31st March, 1921. A permanent President of the Court has been appointed. It is believed that the new Court will be able to keep in touch with the rapidly changing conditions which affect land-values, and will ensure consistency in valuations throughout the Dominion.

#### PUBLIC SERVICE SUPERANNUATION FUND.

The total number of contributors to the fund on the 31st December last was 15,387, and the total revenue for the year was £406,715, including members' contributions, £227,620; interest, £71,949; Government subsidies, £106,000. The total amount expended during the year was £192,007, which comprised retiring and other allowances, £132,073; refunds of contributions, £56,113; cost of administration, £3,790. The total number of superannuation allowances in force at the end of the year was 1,826, representing an annual aggregate payment of £142,719. The amount of the total fund invested on the 31st December last was £1,388,968.

#### TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND.

This fund amounted on the 31st December, 1920, to £599,303, an increase of £72,601 for the year. The amount invested was £583,572. The revenue for the year was £160,821, including contributions, £87,310; interest, £30,295; and Government subsidy, £43,000. The expenditure was £88,220, including retiring-allowances, £66,589, and refund of contributions, £19,590. The experience of the past few years has shown that there are many anomalies connected with the administration of the fund, and it is proposed to submit this session the legislation necessary to remove hardship and to improve the working and administration.