

School Medical Service.—Excellent work has been done during the year by the school Medical Officers. There can be no question that if parents give heed to the medical reports issued as a result of the examinations conducted the general health of a large number of children throughout the district must be materially improved. The Board, however, feels constrained to question the wisdom of the Department in transferring the control of the service from the Education to the Public Health Department.

Dental Clinic.—This district is still without the services of a School Dental Officer, and as the health of too many children is suffering from the lack of skilled dental advice and treatment, due often to ignorance on the part of parents, the Board trusts that a dental clinic for this district will at the earliest possible date be established. In a matter so vitally affecting the welfare of the race the question of the expense entailed should not be allowed to weigh.

Physical Instruction.—Your Inspectors report that they notice a very general improvement in this subject, which is under the direction of the Department's physical instructor. Teachers recognize the beneficial effects of the instruction, and there is marked evidence of the value of physical instruction in the improved physique of the primary-school children in this district.

Conveyance and Boarding Allowance.—The total number of children for whom conveyance allowance was paid during the year was 408, the schools attended by such children numbering fifty-three. Boarding-allowance was paid in the case of twenty-four children in attendance at fourteen schools. The total amount thus expended was £1,936 3s., a decrease over the corresponding figures for the previous year of £93 5s. 9d. With regard to the Department's stipulation that riding-allowance may be claimed only where roads are dangerous for all vehicular traffic, the Board would strongly urge upon the Department the desirability of amending the regulations to permit of riding-allowance being claimed in cases where roads are certified by a responsible authority as being dangerous for vehicles driven by children.

School Libraries.—During the year nineteen schools forwarded contributions, amounting in all to £84 17s., in aid of the establishment of or additions to school libraries, and a sum of £169 14s. was thus available for expenditure, but greater interest in the case of a much larger number of schools might very well be taken in this means of assisting in the cultivation amongst the older pupils of a love for good reading.

Elementary Handwork.—In all schools throughout the district instruction in handwork was given in the various classes, the necessary material being supplied for the subjects of plasticine-modelling, paper-folding and paper-cutting, cardboard-work, pastel-work, and brushwork.

Needlework.—In nineteen schools where there was no female teacher on the staff sewing-mistresses were appointed, and about 190 girls were thus enabled to receive instruction in this most important subject. In forty-two schools classes in advanced needlework were held, the average number of girls in attendance being 941.

Woodwork and Cookery.—The annual classes in these subjects (eighty-four in woodwork and eighty-five in cookery) were held throughout the year at Invercargill (two centres), Gore, and Riverton. For the first time since the inauguration of this work, no S4 pupils were admitted to any centre, a sufficient number of students from S5 and S6 being available to keep all centres going full time. The absence of S4 children has resulted in more satisfactory work being done, as experience has shown that such children are too young to profit sufficiently from the instruction unless they can be given the undivided attention of the instructor, and seldom, if ever, has this been possible, owing to the higher standards from the same schools being also present at the same time.

Agriculture.—During the year recognized classes in agriculture were held at 113 schools, these figures being the same as for last year. The average number of pupils receiving instruction was 1,778. The past year was the first in which the Board has had the full-time services of its agricultural instructor available, as, until the appointment of the present instructor, only four days per week were devoted to the Board's service. The new arrangement has proved very satisfactory, more frequent visits having been possible in the case of schools requiring the guidance and assistance of the instructor. It is gratifying to report that the increased interest that has been aroused in the matter of beautifying and improving school-grounds has been well maintained, but there is still room for improvement in the case of a large number of schools. The amount raised during the year by voluntary contribution for these objects, and forwarded to the Board with application for subsidy, totalled £1,722 10s. 10d., a sum over three times as much as for the previous year. As such contributions carry subsidy at the rate of £1 for £1, this means that improvements were contemplated involving an expenditure throughout the district of well over £3,000.

Physical Measurements.—Classes in this subject were conducted during the year at only seven schools, a decrease of one since the preceding year. Instruction in this subject is now confined to schools which have no facilities for satisfactorily carrying on work in elementary agriculture.

Appended is a table showing the number of schools at which classes were conducted in the various subjects, and the average roll for each :—

Subjects.	Number of Schools.	Average Roll.
Agriculture	113	1,778
Woodwork	84	969
Cookery	85	1,058
Advanced needlework	42	941
Standard needlework (special instructors)	19	190
Physical measurements	7	261