

During last year 222 young persons (comprising 154 females and 68 males) entered the teaching profession in Otago, viz.: As pupil-teachers, 21 females and 12 males; total, 33: as probationers, 39 females and 11 males; total, 50: as Training College students, 94 females and 45 males: total, 139. The ratio of male teachers to female teachers employed in this district is—Adult teachers, 100 to 185; pupil-teachers and probationers, 100 to 295. During the year the Board made 165 appointments of adult teachers. Twenty-eight teachers left Otago to take up appointments in other districts—five went to Auckland, five to Hawke's Bay, one to Taranaki, four to Wellington, one to Nelson, nine to Canterbury, two to Southland, and one to Samoa. Seven teachers entered the Otago Board's service from other districts. Of the eighty-three pupil-teachers and probationers admitted to the service fifty-five had passed the Matriculation Examination, twelve had obtained partial Matriculation, one had a lower leaving-certificate, and fifteen had passed the Intermediate or the Public Service Entrance Examination. It is worthy of note that the young people entering the teaching profession in this district have distinctly higher educational qualifications than formerly. Eighty per cent. of those admitted last year had Matriculation or partial Matriculation status. For 1920 and 1921 the percentages were 44 and 55 respectively.

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

	1921.			1922.			Increase or Decrease.			
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Teachers' salaries and lodging-allowances ..	179,280	6	6*	170,962	3	10†	Dec.	8,318	2	8
Payments to School Committees for incidental expenses	10,253	14	6	10,102	6	8	Dec.	151	7	10
School buildings, purchase of sites, manual and technical buildings and apparatus	39,162	4	1	28,781	3	7	Dec.	10,381	0	6
Administration	4,908	18	8	5,090	10	7‡	Inc.	181	11	11

* Includes two-fifths of Training College staff. † Includes half salary of Training College staff. ‡ Includes organizing teachers' travelling-expenses.

For the conveyance of children to school and for the board of children who had to live away from their homes in order to attend school the Board expended £3,944 17s. 8d., of which the Department contributed £3,500 8s. 1d. Of the balance, the Board received £9, proceeds of the sale of an unused conveyance, and contributed the sum of £435 9s. 7d. out of its General Fund. The expenditure shows a decrease of £247 17s. 3d. as compared with the previous year. Conveyance allowance was paid in respect of 519 children and boarding-allowance for eighty-seven children. The expenditure on school buildings included—General maintenance, repairs, alterations, small additions, and rents, £4,704 6s. 5d.; new buildings, £8,951 19s. 11d.; rebuilding, £1,814 7s. 10d.; purchase of sites, £1,353 10s.; manual and technical purposes, £1,949 17s. At 31st December, 1921, the net balance to credit of all accounts was £24,003 16s. 11d.; the total receipts for the year 1922 amounted to £294,525 15s. 6d., and the total payments to £290,787 1s. 8d. The net balance to credit at 31st December last was £27,742 10s. 9d.

Junior and Senior National Scholarships.—From the public schools in this district there were for the Junior National Scholarships 240 competitors, and for the Senior eighty-nine competitors; thirty-one juniors (12·9 per cent.) and seventeen seniors (19·1 per cent.) were successful in gaining scholarships. Six of the seventeen senior scholarships awarded were gained by pupils of the Board's district high schools. Of the 231 junior scholarships awarded in the Dominion, Otago public-school candidates gained 15·1 per cent., and of the 130 senior scholarships awarded, Otago candidates gained 13·8 per cent.

Inspection of Schools.—The Inspectors group the schools according to their efficiency as follows: Excellent or very good, 17·3 per cent.; good, 50·4 per cent.; very fair, 25 per cent.; fair, 7·3 per cent. As compared with the previous year, the schools in the "good" group have increased by about 6 per cent. of the whole. The highest and lowest groups are about the same as in 1921.

In their report the Inspectors direct attention to the following points:—

(1.) The increased number of changes in the teaching staffs, both in the city and country schools, noticeable during the past few years, is not conducive to the best interests of the pupils.

(2.) Some teachers who group the upper standards have evidently devoted their efforts chiefly to the preparation of the Standard VI pupils for their proficiency certificates, to the detriment of the other classes of the group, under the impression that the Inspectors' estimate of their efficiency as teachers will be based mainly upon the number of proficiency certificates gained by their pupils. The Inspectors seek to remove this misconception, and point out the futility of the practice and its prejudicial effect upon the progress of the pupils.

(3.) Experienced teachers are encouraged to carry out experiments in educational practice where they can do so without detriment to the pupils, and the Inspectors report that several well-qualified teachers have lately undertaken work of this nature with satisfactory results. Intelligence tests designed to give some reliable indication of the mental development of the pupils have been carried out in quite a number of schools. The Inspectors' opinion is that, while the results of these tests may be valuable in confirming the teacher's judgment of a pupil's capacity or attainment, it is unwise for a teacher to rely on these alone when determining the classification of his pupils.