

cost to the Health Department. From the opening date of the clinic, 15th May, to the end of the year, 600 pupils from the junior classes of the Invercargill and suburban schools have been treated. It is proposed to undertake the treatment of the junior classes in the country schools as soon as the dental nurses have completed the work in the town and suburban schools. Now that the Medical Inspector, dental nurses, and physical instructor are co-operating, highly beneficial results to the health and general welfare of our young must accrue.

*Consolidation of Schools.*—During the year the Board has given a good deal of consideration to this matter, and is convinced that, provided satisfactory transport arrangements can be made, the scheme is worthy of favourable consideration by the Department. Several parts of this district lend themselves admirably to the scheme, which will undoubtedly increase the efficiency of the instruction in our country schools, thus giving to country children educational opportunities equal to those enjoyed by the more fortunately situated pupils in the larger centres. When the scheme was first suggested by this Board some years ago considerable opposition was offered by the country. This opposition is now disappearing.

*Educational Films.*—During the year arrangements were made with the New Zealand Educational Film Company to screen at regular intervals suitable educational subjects for the benefit of the children of Standards IV, V, and VI attending the town schools. The Chairman of the Board, accompanied by two officials, attended one of the screenings. In view of the fact that the Chairman's report regarding the educational value of the screening was not satisfactory, the Board decided to communicate with the Department regarding the matter. If good results are to be obtained the main points of the screenings must be explained to the children.

*Elementary Handwork.*—Instruction in the usual subjects of handwork was given in all schools, but, owing to the unsatisfactory delivery of the materials requisitioned for, the work in some subjects was very much hampered, instruction being possible only with the utmost difficulty with makeshift materials. The position can be readily realized when it is mentioned that some material was so late in arriving that it was not available to teachers till the beginning of the third term. Little wonder, therefore, that teachers had nothing but condemnation for the new system under which the material was imported by the Department instead of by the Board. It is good to know, however, that an improvement for the future is assured.

*Needlework.*—The past year has shown a considerable increase in the number of schools where, owing to there being no female teachers on the staff, the services of a local resident had to be secured to give instruction in needlework. As compared with twenty-seven for the previous year, there were for the year under review thirty-seven schools where sewing-mistresses were so employed. In a number of districts, however, no instructress could be obtained, and consequently the girls were unable to receive any instruction in this most important subject. As the time to be devoted to the work is only two hours per week, it would appear that there should be very few districts where local conditions are such as to prevent some suitable person from devoting the necessary time to the work. Instruction in advanced needlework was given during the year in forty-one schools, there being 1,034 girls in attendance.

*Woodwork and Cookery.*—Work in these subjects was carried on as hitherto in the three manual-training schools at Invercargill, Gore, and Riverton. The Riverton centre was opened for only the first term of the year, but at the other centres instruction was given continuously throughout the year.

*Agriculture.*—Recognized classes in this subject were held during the year at 128 schools, this being an increase of nine over the corresponding figures for the previous year. It is evident that teachers and Committees are becoming alive to the necessity for beautifying their school-grounds, and the help given by the Department by way of subsidy on contributions for improvements is appreciated. In this connection the sum of £717 14s. 10d. was received by the Board from various Committees, and with pound-for-pound subsidy thereon there was available for expenditure on improvements the satisfactory sum of £1,435 9s. 8d. With the maintenance of interest in this work the grounds for the reproach regarding the bareness and unattractiveness of school surroundings are gradually disappearing. There are, unfortunately, however, too many districts where little if anything has as yet been done.

*Swimming.*—In last year's report the Board expressed the hope that the Department would see its way to reinstate the capitation for school classes in swimming, and the Board can but reiterate the sentiments contained in that report, the necessity for instruction in this subject being such that the Department should offer every encouragement.

*Finance.*—As compared with 1921 and 1922, the Board's financial position has very much improved. The receipts during the year were £132,654 13s. 6d., and payments £130,980 9s. 2d. The credit balance at the end of the year was £10,389 15s. 6d., £8,750 of which was on fixed deposit. Of the credit balance, £10,389 15s. 6d., £4,500 is earmarked for special purposes.

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The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

HORACE E. NIVEN, Chairman.