

*Conveyance and Boarding.*—The number of children who were receiving the conveyance grant was 1,700, while 120 received boarding-allowance. The total expenditure on these services was £6,803 4s. 6d., of which sum the Board contributed £277 6s. 6d. from its General Fund. Motor-buses for the conveyance of pupils are in operation at Clandeboye, Geraldine, Harihari, Hokitika, Lyndhurst, Mackenzie, Methven, Orari, Oxford, Southbridge, and Waimate.

*Manual and Technical Instruction.*—Elementary handwork has again formed a feature in the curriculum of the work of the lower standards as a help to the better understanding of other subjects of the syllabus. There was little variation in the course of instruction except that greater use was made of the kindergarten and Montessori methods. The handwork material supplied by the Department was of good quality, and there was sufficient to meet all requirements. Enough kindergarten material was received from the Department to provide all schools in Grades 5, 6, and 7 with a supply. This has been found a great boon, as hitherto the kindergarten work in this district has been much hampered for lack of adequate material and proper apparatus.

*Agriculture.*—Weather conditions combined with the short year proved factors which greatly militated against the success of the work, in consequence of which the practical results have generally been disappointing both to instructors and pupils. Forest-tree culture received considerable prominence during the year, and with the assistance of the Forestry Department much valuable work has been inaugurated. During the year the Board took in hand a scheme under which it is hoped that waste lands convenient to schools will be planted out with a certain number of trees each year. Two hundred and sixty-one schools were recognized as taking agriculture, and the rural course was carried on at eleven district high schools with an attendance of 404 pupils.

*Technical and Continuation Classes.*—Outside the large centres very little interest was taken in the conducting of technical and continuation classes. The greatest amount of activity was displayed in the Ellesmere district.

*Physical Instruction.*—The instruction has been carried out, as heretofore, by the three departmental instructors (Mr. G. Webb, Mr. T. L. Barnes, and Miss I. Greenwood). The curtailed school year allowed of only one visit being made to the schools, but the teachers themselves have been carrying on the instruction satisfactorily. When lessons are taken briskly the benefit is most marked, and the Medical Officers report a very pleasing decrease of spinal curvatures, stooping shoulders, flat chests, &c. A teachers' refresher course under the direct supervision of the special instructors would be much appreciated, and it is hoped that this may be arranged at some suitable time during the ensuing year.

*Medical Inspection.*—The two School Medical Officers continue their excellent work in the regular inspection of school-children and in health education. In addition to their routine duties, especially valuable work has been done by Dr. Eleanor Baker-McLagan on the causation and control of goitre, and by Dr. Phillips in rousing public interest in the vital question of ventilation, fresh air, &c. Both render valuable services to the Board by their examination of entrants to the teaching profession. The Medical Officers are ably assisted by their excellent staff of school nurses.

*Inspectorate.*—During the year Mr. William Brock retired after forty-nine years' service as teacher, Inspector, and Senior Inspector, in Canterbury. Mr. Brock's intimate knowledge of the district and his wide experience in the various branches of the service made him an officer whose opinions were of extreme value to the Board in the administration of its affairs. The retiring officer left with the best wishes of the Board members and his fellow-officers. Mr. Murdoch McLeod was appointed by the Department as Senior Inspector for Canterbury.

*General Remarks.*—As regards its administrative policy in the future, the Board considers that the following problems insistently demand solution :—

(1.) Sole-charge schools : In the main these schools, comprising over 60 per cent. of the whole, are officered by ex-students, whose professional training of two years has no doubt been the best possible. In view, however, of their comparative lack of experience in their difficult task as teachers in sole charge, in the interests of efficiency, these teachers in their earlier years of service need more assistance and supervision—help in their special difficulties and guidance in the preparation of practical schemes of work and in the promotion of their pupils—than can be given them under existing conditions.

(2.) Secondary education : The provision is urgently needed of a suitable type of secondary education for the large number of pupils who qualify for free secondary education by passing the Proficiency Examination, either by the institution of junior high schools or by some other carefully considered system.

(3.) Appointment of teachers : Despite the loyal service of the staff of Inspectors and the valuable and sympathetic assistance of the Senior Inspector, the experience of this Board proves that in the interest of education a modification of the existing method of appointment by eliminating the mechanical factors of the scheme and the use of the grading scheme as a rigid appointment system is very necessary.

(4.) Consolidation of schools : If the policy of consolidating schools is to become anything more than a pious aspiration, recent experience tends to confirm the Board in the opinion that some comprehensive and well-defined policy should be evolved to make provision for the conveyance of pupils to a central school where such action is desired or deemed necessary.

*Department.*—Since the close of the year the appointment of Sir James Parr as High Commissioner in London has been announced. The Board desires to place on record its congratulations to Sir James on his elevation to such an important position in the government of the Dominion, and to express its thanks to him for the keen interest he displayed in educational matters during his term of office as Minister of Education, and the uniform courtesy and consideration with which he always met the Board. It is also desired to express appreciation of the cordial relations that have existed between the departmental officers and the Board during the past term.

I have, &c.,

T. HUGHES, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.