

promise to be valuable in providing norms or standards for use in classification and promotion. They will also give considerable information on the extent and causes of retardation and on the relative effectiveness of rural and urban instruction.

Distinctive advance in the artistic sphere of education has been made by the appointment of Mr. E. Douglas Tayler, F.R.C.O., A.R.C.M., to the position of Supervisor of School Music, and Mr. Tayler has already taken up his duties, and his efforts have resulted in a much wider interest being taken in the important matter of improving the music in our schools.

COST OF EDUCATION.

The appendix to this report shows in detail under various headings the expenditure on education during the financial year ending 31st March, 1926. The total expenditure, including endowment revenue, amounts to £3,895,034, as against £3,723,000 for the previous year, an increase of £172,034. This increase is largely accounted for by the natural increase in the number of school-children and the increased cost of school buildings.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

During the year very considerable progress was made with regard to the erection of school buildings both in rural districts and in suburban areas, and the allocation provided for the purpose was entirely expended. Many small schools were erected to replace rented accommodation in unsatisfactory halls, and in the towns and cities also permanent additional accommodation was similarly provided. As in the past, it is the Department's policy to give prior consideration to the question of school accommodation in backblock districts where no facilities whatever at present exist. Among the larger schools completed during the year may be mentioned those at Epsom, Newmarket, Brixton Road, and Point Chevalier in the Auckland District; Westown and Eltham in Taranaki; Tawhero and Bunnythorpe in the Wanganui District; Napier South, Mahora (remodelling), Dannevirke South (remodelling), and Dannevirke North (remodelling) in Hawke's Bay; Kaiwarra and Mount Cook in Wellington; Christchurch West and Richmond, Lyttelton Street, Kumara, and Southbridge in Canterbury; Caversham in Otago; and St. George and Invercargill North in Southland; while work is in progress at Napier Street, Auckland; Papanui, Christchurch; and Invercargill South, Southland.

A system of consolidation of smaller schools has been inaugurated at Piopio, Lower Mangorei, and Oxford, where existing schools within a reasonable radius have been closed down and the children conveyed by bus to a fully equipped centre.

In order to bridge the gap between primary and secondary schools and make better provision for educational training the junior-high-school system has been introduced in New Zealand. Such junior high schools have been established at Kowhai, Matamata, and Whangarei in the Auckland District, and Waitaki in Otago, where accommodation has been provided by alterations or additions to existing buildings.

Training-college buildings have been completed at Auckland (first portion) and Christchurch. The second portion of the Auckland building is now under construction.

New high schools have been erected by the Public Works Department at Whangarei, Hastings, Hutt Valley, Wellington East, and Invercargill, and additions to existing buildings elsewhere. Under the supervision of other architects the Napier Boys' High School, Riccarton Boys' High School, and Balclutha High School have also been built.

With regard to technical schools, additions have been made to the Hamilton Technical School, and new workshops at the Wellington Technical School are at present under course of erection.

The Auckland University College Arts Building has been completed, and the new medical and dental buildings at Dunedin are almost ready for occupation.

It is the Department's policy to secure, wherever possible, sites for future school buildings in close proximity to towns and cities before the price of land rises excessively through close settlement.

This is particularly necessary in certain areas at Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch, especially at the first-mentioned place, where the population has been increasing at an extremely rapid rate.