

Medical and Dental Inspection.—The value of the work being carried out by the School Medical Officer and school nurses is reflected in the better general health of the pupils. Teachers and parents realize that good is being done and gladly co-operate. The Board appreciates the attendance of the School Medical Officer at its meetings for the purpose of discussing with members various phases of the work. Dental clinics are now established at Oamaru, Mosgiel, Green Island, Lawrence, and Tapanui.

Physical Instruction.—The Senior Physical Instructor reports that practically every school was visited during the year, and that the instruction in this important subject over the whole district may be called very good.

Teachers' Salaries.—It appears to the Board that there are two avenues open for female teachers—standard work and infant work—and these two goals should be made equally attractive. Under the present scale of salaries the third female assistant in schools of Grade VII finds it necessary to seek promotion as an infant-mistress in order to secure the higher rate of salary. The Board believes that an increase of, say, £15 in the maximum salary of the third female assistant in Grade VII schools would tend to remove this anomaly.

Dunedin Exhibition.—The Board rendered all possible assistance in order to make a success of the Education Court at the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition. Daily demonstrations in cookery and woodwork were continued throughout the period of the Exhibition, while the teachers of the Dunedin and suburban schools loyally assisted in an extensive programme of activities. Typical lessons covering a variety of subjects were given in the demonstration area and the specially equipped class-rooms.

School Committees.—The Board again records its appreciation of the splendid work performed by School Committees. A Committee's usefulness is not limited to the mere carrying-out of the routine duties placed upon it by the Education Act, and every live Committee realizes that it possesses an immense power for good in a school district.

Board's Secretary.—On the 31st December Mr. S. M. Park retired on superannuation after fifty-one years in the Board's service. For sixteen years of that period he had been the Board's highly efficient secretary. His value as the Board's chief executive officer was greatly enhanced by his unique knowledge of the history and progress of primary education in Otago. Suitable tributes were paid to Mr. Park at the time of his retirement by the Board and other educational bodies, but it is fitting to place on record here the Board's high appreciation of Mr. Park's tactful and efficient guidance, which in no small degree has made for the smooth and harmonious progress of primary education in this province, and for the harmonious relations which exist between the Department and the Board. Mr. G. W. Carrington, Chief Clerk in the Board's Office, was unanimously appointed to fill the vacancy, and promises to follow in Mr. Park's footsteps as an efficient and tactful officer.

Department.—The Board desires to thank the Minister and officers of the Department for their careful consideration of the Board's applications and representations. The Board regrets the retirement of Mr. Caughley, Director of Education, and records here its appreciation of the fair treatment and courteous attention given by him to every question. Through its contact with him over a number of years the Board has learned to appreciate Mr. Caughley as an educationist of high ideals and as one who always had the courage of his convictions. Mr. F. G. A. Stuckey succeeded Mr. T. R. Fleming as Senior Inspector, and to him and his colleagues the Board is indebted for willing co-operation and advice.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
J. WALLACE, Chairman.

SOUTHLAND.

SIR,—

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, 1914, the Education Board of the District of Southland has the honour to submit the following report of its proceedings for the year, 1926 :—

The Board.—The members in office at the beginning of the year were: Messrs. H. Smith (Chairman), A. Bain, G. F. Johnson, A. W. Jones, P. A. de la Perrelle, S. Rice, J. C. Thomson and J. D. Trotter.

Board Meetings.—During the year to which this report refers the Board held twelve ordinary and one special meeting, and the Executive Committee, which consists of all the members of the Board, met twenty-three times. In addition to the attendance at meetings of the Board, members have given much time in visiting various parts of the district to confer with Committees, parents, and teachers regarding school matters.

Schools.—During the year to which this report has reference two small schools, Caroline and Lynwood, were closed on account of the reduced attendance, and one new school at Cattle Flat was opened. The residents of Cattle Flat provided a suitable class-room in which the work of educating their families could be carried on till it was seen whether the attendance of pupils warranted the Board in making application to the Department for a grant for the erection of a suitable building.

District High Schools.—During the year the work of the secondary departments of the two district high schools—Riverton and Wyndham—has been quite satisfactory. At Riverton five pupils passed the Matriculation Examination and five passed the Public Service Entrance Examination. During the year the Department authorized grants which enabled the Board to improve the accommodation