

REPORT.

I. INTRODUCTORY AND GENERAL.

SINCE I assumed the portfolio of Education on the 22nd September, 1931, I have had the unenviable task of effecting reductions in expenditure in almost every branch of the Service. At the outset it is but fair to say that the Government has been very loath indeed to curtail educational facilities, realizing as it does the paramount importance to the people of maintaining a sound education system. The severe financial depression through which this country is passing, in common with most other countries to-day, made it imperative that economies should be effected in all Departments of the State, and it was impossible to avoid reducing expenditure on education. Every care has, however, been taken to effect economies that will have the least harmful effect on the system as a whole. The earnest desire of the Government to maintain the essential parts of the system is evidenced by the fact that, although the National Expenditure Commission felt impelled to recommend some very drastic economies, not all of these were adopted by the Government. The task was rendered more difficult by the fact that no less than 80 per cent. of the total sum of money appropriated annually by Parliament for current expenditure on education is spent on salaries. When this item was excluded there remained, apart from capital expenditure and superannuation subsidy, only about £700,000 on which reductions might be effected. The difficulty of making reductions from this figure can be seen by a comparison of the following large items which are included in the table below:—

	£
Maintenance of buildings	154,995
Conveyance	84,123
School Committee grants	104,001
University grant, scholarships, and bursaries	111,564
Allowance to training college students	121,916
Child-welfare	123,065
	<u>£699,664</u>

Up to the 31st March last the following were the principal economies effected:—

REDUCTION IN EXPENDITURE, 1931-32, AS COMPARED WITH 1929-30.

	Expenditure, 1929-30.	Expenditure, 1931-32.	Reduction.
	£	£	£
Salaries of Teachers, Instructors, Child-welfare Officers, Inspectors of Schools, and departmental officers	2,626,628	2,346,943	279,685
Subsidies to primary, secondary, and technical schools, and University colleges	39,768	2,132	37,636
Subsidies to public libraries	2,998	..	2,998
Maintenance of buildings	154,995	106,480	48,515
Manual instruction	90,951	73,156	17,795
Travelling-expenses of Inspectors of Schools, Child-welfare Officers, &c.	25,331	18,937	6,394
Education Boards' administration	39,148	34,633	4,515
National Scholarships	11,183	9,787	1,396
School and class libraries, &c.	2,052	..	2,052
<i>School Journal</i> —Printing, &c.	7,001	5,772	1,229
Grants to University of New Zealand and constituent colleges	71,207	53,309	17,898
University Scholarships and Bursaries	26,663	15,648	11,015
Workers' Educational Association	3,500	3,031	469
Allowances to training college students	121,916	104,341	17,575
Examinations	7,567	3,370	4,197
Maintenance of children in child-welfare institutions	34,629	31,800	2,829
Material and stores, child-welfare	4,982	3,677	1,305
Printing and stationery	4,887	2,196	2,691
Gramophone records	3,918	154	3,764
Grants to Teachers' Superannuation Fund	143,000	43,000	100,000
New buildings, additions, &c.	443,885	259,932	183,953
Other*	315,569	327,189	—11,620†
	4,181,778	3,445,487	736,291

* Includes School Committee incidentals, conveyance and board of pupils, boarding-out of children, &c.

† Increase.