

on the several High School Boards being as follows: Akaroa, Mr. R. Latter; Ashburton, Mr. A. Orr and Rev. G. B. Inglis; Rangiora, Mr. A. S. Bruce.

**BUILDINGS.**—One of the main features in connection with building operations during the year has been the expenditure on the Christchurch suburban schools, substantial additions having been necessary in the cases of Addington, St. Albans, and Waltham, while a new school has also been provided for the locality known as the Port Hills. The Hanmer Plains School has been practically rebuilt, and at Waiau and Templeton new rooms have been added. The Ellesmere School and the small school at Ashley Gorge have been enlarged. Early in the year the Kaikoura Town School was destroyed by fire. The new building to take its place is at the date of this report about to be opened. The school at Omihi, which had become too small for the increased attendance, has been enlarged and removed to a more central site. A large expenditure in the aggregate has been incurred on alterations and improvements to the schools at Christchurch West, South Belt, Normal School, Fernside, Kaiapoi, Leithfield, Papanui, Rangiora, St. Albans, Sydenham, and Waltham; while many other schools have either been painted or repaired. The cost of the new schools erected and of all the substantial additions has been met by special grants from the Government, to whom the thanks of the Board are due for the manner in which these requirements have been provided for. The Department has also recently authorised a grant for erection of school in the Lower Riccarton locality, for which a valuable site has already been procured. Owing to the continued extension of North Linwood, the claims of that locality for an additional school will shortly demand the Board's further consideration. The restrictions placed on the Board as regards the expenditure of its building fund continued during the year now under review, but the Board has recently learned, with a good deal of satisfaction, that in future it will be allowed more freedom of action when dealing with applications for additions or for new schools, provided due provision has been made for maintenance, repairs, and rebuilding worn-out schools. The total expenditure on buildings during 1905, including repairs, painting, and improvements, was £7,199 9s. 8d.

For a considerable time the Board has been aware of the objections to the old style of desks and forms in use in its schools—that they are out of date, sometimes insanitary, and should be replaced by modern furniture better suited to the hygienic and educational requirements of school life. The Board has therefore had this matter under its earnest consideration, has inspected some of the most modern school furniture imported from America and elsewhere, and has also had the benefit of the best expert advice, before adopting the dual desk for primary schools and single desks for the secondary department of district high schools. Though the Board is aware of the desirability of equipping its schools with the most modern furniture—and it is not surprised that School Committees are constantly making requests in this direction—yet it is quite unable, from financial reasons, to do much more than furnish additions and new schools in the manner stated. But the Board hopes that the funds available may also be sufficient to replace old worn-out furniture with modern. The larger question of replacing the whole of the furniture in the Board's schools is one for the consideration of Parliament. It would cost for North Canterbury alone quite £20,000; but this expense would probably be less than the cost of the additions that would be necessary to the schools consequent on the introduction of the modern desks, which require more space than those at present in use. In dealing with all the schools, but more especially the larger ones, the question of staff would also have to be considered, seeing that with the modern desks, whether single or dual, the number of children in each class-room would necessarily be considerably reduced and additional room have to be found elsewhere, in this way at once creating the need of a larger staff.

The number of schools in operation at the end of the year, including 23 aided schools, was 210, classified as follows: Not over 10, 18; 11 to 20, 43; 21 to 25, 19; 26 to 40, 41; 41 to 50, 22; 51 to 70, 15; 71 to 90, 11; 91 to 120, 12; 121 to 150, 5; 151 to 200, 4; 201 to 250, 4; 251 to 280, 2; 281 to 330, 2; 331 to 390, 3; 421 to 480, 3; above 510, 6.

**MAINTENANCE.**—The expenditure on salaries and allowances to teachers engaged in primary departments amounted to £57,965 18s. 7d., and grants to School Committees and other incidental expenses (inclusive of special grant of 9d.) to £6,717 16s. 4d., making a total of £64,683 14s. 11d. The average attendances on which payment of salaries and incidentals was made were 16,703 and 16,822 respectively, so that the cost per head of salaries was nearly £3 9s. 5d., and that of incidental expenses 8s., a total of £3 17s. 5d. per head. The expenditure on the salaries of teachers engaged in secondary departments was £2,506 12s. 7d.

**TEACHERS.**—The total number of teachers in the Board's service at the end of 1905 was 520. Of these, 206 (120 males and 86 females) were heads of schools or departments, or in sole charge; 207 (43 males and 164 females) were assistants; and 107 (31 males and 76 females) were pupil-teachers. There were 27 sewing mistresses in the Board's employment at the end of the year.

**IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE.**—The improvement in the attendance at the Board's schools, referred to in report of last year, has been sustained, the Truant Officer reporting that generally speaking parents are now more ready to comply with the law. Fines were inflicted in eighty of the 125 cases taken into Court during the year, the total amount of fines being £15 4s., a slight decrease as compared with the previous year.

**TRAINING COLLEGE.**—In his report the Director of the Training College gives full particulars as to the number of students that entered for training during the year. Mr. Watkins also refers to the difficulties met with in the children's department owing to the many changes that have taken place. The newer conditions under which the training and practising departments are now carried on have necessitated extensive alterations to several of the class-rooms. The increased grant lately made by the Department for training colleges has enabled the Board to increase the staff, which can now be arranged on a more satisfactory basis. There has been some difficulty in finding a suitable location for the science laboratory. The conversion of part of the old drill-shed for the purpose has been definitely decided upon.

**INSPECTION.**—In the Inspectors' report will be found the statistical information annually furnished in regard to the number of children examined, also interesting reference to the principal subjects of instruction. Out of an enrolment of 19,590 pupils attending the Board's schools 18,556 presented