

TRUANCY.—Eight hundred and seventy-six notices were posted to parents and guardians for infringements of the Education Act, 1908, under section 153. Twenty-one notices were served on parents whose children were not on the roll of any school, under section 152. One hundred and twenty-eight cases of irregular attendance were investigated. Eighty-two penalty summonses were issued under section 153. Eighty-two convictions were obtained under the above summonses. The total fines for the year amounted to £18 2s.

TRAINING COLLEGE.—Thirty-two male and sixty-eight female students were enrolled at the Dunedin Training College. Of these, seventy-three were from Otago, twenty-six came from Southland, and one came from South Canterbury. Sixty-five of them had been either pupil-teachers or probationers. Their bursaries amounted to £2,191 7s. 4d., their lodging-allowances to £2,068 2s. 2d., their college fees to £841 11s. 6d., their travelling-expenses to £18 8s.: total, £5,119 9s.

Proficiency certificates were gained by 923 pupils, being twenty-five more than in the previous year. Competency certificates of Standard VI were gained by 168 pupils, being seventy-four less than in the previous year.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS.—New schools have been erected at Kauroo, Tapui, Wharetoa, Waitapeka, Wanaka, Greenfield, Ngapuna, Bendigo, and Puketiro; additions to schools at Kurow, Houipapa, Sawyer's Bay, Ranfurly, Evansdale, Musselburgh, and Inch Valley. Forty-two schools and teachers' residences have been painted, while repairs and renovations of a more or less extensive nature have been effected at 118 schools and teachers' residences. Eleven schools were conducted in buildings not belonging to the Board.

INCIDENTAL EXPENSES OF SCHOOLS.—The total sum paid to School Committees for incidental expenses was £5,416 14s. 7d., which was equal to 5s. 11½d. per unit of the average attendance for the district.

SECONDARY CLASSES OF DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—At the end of 1910 the numbers in the secondary classes at these schools were: Tokomairiro, 50; Lawrence, 40; Normal, 36; Balclutha, 34; Palmerston, 31; Tapanui, 22; Mosgiel, 21; Port Chalmers, 17; Naseby, 12; total, 263.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—Fifty-seven School Committees took advantage of the Board's regulation granting a subsidy of 10s. for every £1 raised locally and expended on the purchase of books for school libraries. The subsidies claimed ranged in amount from £2 10s. to 10s., the total amount paid by the Board being £80 5s. 9d.

FREE SCHOOL-BOOKS.—The Board accepted with considerable hesitancy and reluctance the Department's scheme of free school-books, and after a year's experience of its working is compelled to concur in the almost unanimous disapproval of it expressed by Boards, School Committees, and teachers. It would probably be within the mark to say that from 75 to 80 per cent. of the pupils have provided their own books, and from this fact the conclusion must inevitably be drawn that there is no strong desire on the part of parents for the supply of the books by the State. In a number of the schools the books forwarded by the Board for some of the classes are lying in the cupboards unused. In this district the pupils have, so far, not been permitted to take the books to their homes, the Government having given no definite promise that a grant for the reinstatement of worn-out books would be provided whenever necessary. The Board coincides in the opinion generally expressed that if the grant is to be continued it should be devoted to the purchase of school requisites such as drawing, copy, and exercise books, and of stationery considered necessary for the pupils.

CONVEYANCE OF CHILDREN.—Capitation was paid at the rate of 6d. per child per day attendance in respect of 242 children attending thirty-three schools in the district, the total amount of capitation earned being £1,048 7s. 2d.

SUPERANNUATION.—The Board has resolved that male teachers and officers in its service shall retire on attaining the age of sixty-five years. In accordance with this decision two officers and four teachers retired on superannuation.

I have, &c..

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

THOMAS FERGUS, Chairman.

SOUTHLAND.

SIR,—

Education Office, Invercargill, 31st March, 1911.

In compliance with the provisions of section 174 of the Education Act, 1908, we have the honour to present the following report of the proceedings of the Southland Board of Education for the year 1910.

THE BOARD.—During the year to which this report refers the *personnel* of the Board has undergone no change. At the election held in July last the retiring members—viz., Messrs. Thomas MacGibbon (East Ward), J. C. Thomson, M.P. (West Ward), and W. N. Stirling (Central Ward)—were re-elected unopposed. At the ordinary meeting of the Board held on the 2nd September Mr. W. N. Stirling was unanimously elected Chairman for the ensuing year. Messrs W. Macalister and J. Crosby Smith were reappointed to represent the Board on the Southland High Schools Board of Governors; and Messrs. G. James Anderson, D. Gilchrist, and Thomas MacGibbon continued their services as members of the Gore High School Board. On the Trust of the School Commissioners of Otago Mr. MacGibbon continued to act as the Board's representative.

SCHOOLS.—At the close of the preceding year the schools in the education district numbered 166. This number was increased during the year by the establishment of new schools in the