

£5,850 19s. 7d., or £556 18s. 3d. more than in 1911. The report of the Principal will be found in Appendix G.*

In June, 1912, the time arrived for the retirement of Professor David Renfrew White, M.A., the Principal of the College, in conformity with the Board's regulations. In view, however, of the importance of his position, the Board requested him to continue in office till the end of the Training College year. This he consented to do, and consequently his connexion with the institution over which, as Principal, he has presided with conspicuous ability and faithfulness for the past eighteen years was not terminated till the 28th February, 1913. The retiring Principal's period of service under the Board extends over forty-one years, and he leaves behind him a fine record in various departments of educational work.

Certificates.—Proficiency certificates were gained by 1,015 pupils (thirty-eight more than in the previous year), and competency certificates by 148 pupils (sixteen less than in the previous year).

Incidental Expenses of Schools.—The sum paid to School Committees to meet incidental expenses was £6,179 16s. 1d., equal to 6s. 5½d. per unit of the average attendance, and nearly 1s. per unit more than the minimum the Board is required to pay. During the year a new scale of payments was introduced, which practically absorbed the whole of the extra statutory grant of 9d. per head. From the incidental allowance of all Committees whose schools are connected with a sewerage-system or provided with a septic tank, and thus freed from sanitary rates, a deduction is made according to a graduated scale based upon the average attendance of each school for the preceding quarter.

Secondary Classes at District High Schools.—In December last the numbers in the secondary classes at these schools were as follows: Balclutha, 48; Tokomairiro, 44; Lawrence, 40; Normal, 32; Tapanui, 27; Palmerston, 18; Mosgiel, 16; Port Chalmers, 15; Naseby, 9; total, 249, or three more than in December, 1911.

School Libraries.—Subsidies ranging in amount from 10s. to £2 10s., and totalling £42 17s. 2d., were paid to twenty-six School Committees to assist in providing books for school libraries.

Conveyance of Children.—The capitation allowance for these services was claimed in respect of fifty-one schools, or thirteen more than in the previous year, the total payment being £1,334 9s. 9d., an increase of £241 3s. The capitation-payments of 2s. 6d. per head for the board of children who have to live away from home to attend school amounted to £40 12s. 6d. While hoping that the new provision made for the conveyance of children will relieve the position, the Board cannot refrain from expressing its regret that the Department has not seen fit to adopt the suggestion previously made that the Boards should be given a free hand to deal with each individual case upon its own merits. The conditions under which children have to be conveyed are so widely divergent that it is impossible for any inelastic regulation to provide the means of meeting the varying requirements.

Inspection of Schools.—The Inspectors group the schools according to their efficiency, as follows: Excellent, very good, or good, 60 per cent.; satisfactory, 34 per cent.; fair to inferior, 6 per cent. These figures show a material decline in efficiency, which the Inspectors attribute mainly to the prevalence of diseases throughout the district during the year. The report of the Inspectors will be found in Appendix E.†

Superannuation.—The Board is strongly of opinion that as a matter of simple justice an amendment in the Teachers' Superannuation Act should be made, to provide for a contributor's retiring-allowance being calculated on the salary of the three highest consecutive years of service.

School Committees.—The Board desires to record its appreciation of the interest and enthusiasm manifested by the members of School Committees throughout the district and the valuable assistance they continue to render to the cause of education.

I have, &c.,

JAMES MITCHELL, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

SOUTHLAND.

SIR,—

Education Office, Invercargill, 26th March, 1913.

In compliance with the requirements of section 174 of the Education Act, 1908, the Education Board of the District of Southland has the honour to present the following report of its proceedings for the year 1912:—

The Board.—During the year to which this report has reference the constitution of the Board's membership underwent no change. At the annual election held in July last the retiring members—Messrs. D. Gilchrist (East Ward), W. Macalister (Central Ward), and H. A. Archdall (West Ward)—were re-elected, the two first mentioned being unopposed. The following were the Board's representatives on various educational bodies: Southland Boys' and Girls' High Schools Board—Messrs. William Macalister, B.A., LL.B., and J. Crosby Smith, F.L.S.; Gore High School Board—Messrs. Thomas MacGibbon, Duncan Gilchrist, and John MacGibbon, the last mentioned being elected to fill the most recent vacancy. During the year the Board met twelve times (the first Friday of each month) for ordinary and once for special business. The Executive Committee met twenty-four times, at regular intervals in each month, and at these meetings the major portion of the Board's ordinary business was considered.

* The report referred to is printed in Appendix D.

† The report referred to is printed in Appendix C.