

General.—The Board desires to take this opportunity of extending its thanks to the various School Committees and Technical School Boards for services so willingly rendered in the cause of education, and to its teachers for the whole-hearted and efficient manner in which they have discharged their duties.

The Board also desires to record its appreciation of the Department's attention to its requests, and courteous reception of its many statements and claims.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

J. S. RUTHERFORD, Chairman.

OTAGO.

SIR,—

Education Office, Dunedin, 21st March, 1916.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, 1914, the Education Board of the District of Otago has the honour to present the following report of its proceedings for the year 1915:—

Board.—The Board has been constituted as follows: Northern Ward—Messrs. Donald Borrie, James Mitchell, and Andrew McKerrow; Central Ward—Messrs. William Scott, George C. Israel, and James Wallace; Southern Ward—Messrs. D. T. Fleming, Parker McKinlay, M.A., and James Smith. At the annual election in July the three retiring members, Messrs. Borrie (Northern Ward), Israel (Central Ward), and Fleming (Southern Ward) were re-elected unopposed. The Board records with sincere regret the death of two of its members—Messrs. A. McKerrow and George C. Israel. Mr. McKerrow was one of the Board's oldest members, and one whose good judgment, happy disposition, and generous impulses rendered him a valued and trusted colleague. Mr. Israel was the Board's Chairman for the past two years, and was an ardent supporter of all measures having for their object the care and cultivation of child-nature. The services he rendered to the cause of education in many capacities will be long remembered. The following were the Board's representatives on various educational bodies: Council of the University of Otago—Messrs. G. C. Israel and James Mitchell; Otago High Schools' Board—Messrs. G. C. Israel and D. T. Fleming; Waitaki High Schools' Board—Mr. James Mitchell; Boards of Management of Associated (Technical) Classes—Dunedin, Messrs. G. C. Israel, P. McKinlay, M.A., and James Wallace; Oamaru, Messrs. James Mitchell and F. S. Aldred; Balclutha, Messrs. D. T. Fleming and W. W. Turner, B.A.; Milton, Messrs. P. McKinlay, M.A., and W. B. Graham.

Number of Schools.—The school at Akatore Coast was reopened, a new school was opened at Airedale, and household schools were carried on at Morven Hills, Paerau, and Upper Nevis. The school at Taiaroa Head was closed on the 31st August. The number of schools in operation at 31st December, 1915, was 257, an increase of two for the year.

Teachers.—On the 31st December there were in the Board's service 742 teachers, classified as under:—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Head teachers	104	1	105
Sole teachers	51	110	161
Assistant teachers	53	254	307
Total of adult teachers	208	365	573
Pupil-teachers	18	50	68
Probationers	10	40	50
Teachers of needlework	27	27
Manual and technical (special teachers)	14	10	24
Totals for 1915	250	492	742
Totals for 1914	256	450	706
Increase for 1915	—6	42	36

For the past two years the ratio of male to female teachers has been:—

	Adult Teachers.	Pupil-teachers and Probationers.
1914	100 males to 162 females.	100 males to 267 females.
1915	100 „ 175 „	100 „ 321 „

There were 148 appointments of adult teachers made. The monthly average of teachers employed to fill relieving or casual vacancies was thirty-seven; in 1914 it was thirty-three. There were thirty-four pupil-teachers and twenty-eight probationers appointed during the year; eighteen were males and forty-four were females; twenty-eight of them had passed the Matriculation Examination, twenty-five of them had passed the Public Service Examination or the Senior Free Place Examination, and four had passed the Proficiency Examination.

Attendance of Pupils.—The weekly roll number for each quarter showed an increase over that of the corresponding quarter for the previous two years. The weekly roll for the last three years has been (mean of the four quarters)—1913, 20,957; 1914, 21,336; 1915, 21,770. The increase in the mean roll number for the whole district was 434, or 1.9 per cent.