

attending large primary schools, and twenty-six had been attending district high schools and secondary schools. For the Senior Scholarships there were 126 candidates—girls, 53; boys, 73. Of these, twenty qualified—nine girls and eleven boys. For the two Gamnaek Scholarships there were twelve candidates.

*Committee Incidental Allowances.*—The continued high prices ruling for fuel and material required in connection with the heating and cleaning of the schools make it very difficult for Committees to meet the expense of such items out of the usual allowances for incidental expenses. In order to assist Committees as far as it is practicable the Board pays them in the aggregate considerably more than the amount received from the Department for this purpose. Some relief has been given by the Government granting an extra allowance of approximately 2s. 6d. per pupil, but even this additional grant does not meet the increased cost of labour and materials.

*Irregular Attendance.*—The Truant Officer reported that notices had been sent to the parents of 1,715 children, and that Court proceedings had been taken in 99 cases. Sickness among the children during the year has been more continuous and varied than on any previous occasion for years past. Owing to the shortness of labour a number of children have been employed by parents, and this has interfered to some extent with the attendance.

*Cowie Bequest.*—The late Mr. Alexander Cowie made a bequest of £200 per annum for the establishment of a scholarship tenable at a State or Protestant secondary school or at Canterbury College. The Board has placed on record its high appreciation of the generous bequest, and regulations to meet the conditions of the bequest are now under consideration.

*The War.*—The war, which has now happily come to a close, materially affected the school staffs, in all 119 teachers, including forty-eight pupil-teachers, probationers, and students, having joined the Expeditionary Forces. The Board was fortunately able in nearly all cases to secure satisfactory relieving teachers to fill the temporary vacancies. The teachers are now returning from the front, but in view of the retirement of many, either on superannuation or owing to marriage, there will be no difficulty in securing positions for the temporary teachers being displaced.

*Manual and Technical Instruction.*—These two important branches of education received a considerable impetus during the year. Elementary handwork was taken at all schools in the district. The Supervisor reports that teachers showed greater keenness than usual to take up advanced branches of handwork. Arrangements have been made for a greatly increased building programme during the incoming year. Although the attendances at technical and continuation classes were still very much affected by war conditions, successful courses of instruction were carried on at all the principal centres of the district. Teachers' classes have been conducted at Timaru, Greymouth, and Christchurch. These classes have been well attended, and the instruction given has been very useful to the younger teachers both in their actual teaching and in their examination work. To sum up, there is ample evidence to show that manual and technical work throughout the district, despite the adverse conditions of the year, the war, the very severe winter, and the influenza epidemic, has made a steady advance.

*Managers, Christchurch Technical College.*—Under the Education Act of 1914 the Board has the right to appoint eleven representatives to the Board of Managers of the Christchurch Technical College, instead of three as formerly. The Board accordingly proceeded to appoint eight additional members; but at the October meeting, on the anomaly giving the Board such a large representation being recognized, the appointees agreed—on the recommendation of the Education Board—not to take their seats during the year. This courteous proceeding was very much appreciated by the Department, which stated that during the coming session of Parliament the Act would be amended, giving the Board more adequate representation.

*Agriculture.*—The interest in Agricultural education is still on the increase. For the first time a permanent agricultural instructor was located on the Coast, thus enabling the rural course of instruction to be taken at Hokitika and Greymouth. In 212 primary schools formal instruction in agriculture has been given. Owing to falling attendance, some difficulty has occurred in carrying out the practical work in connection with the secondary classes. Teachers' classes in agriculture have been conducted at Christchurch, Greymouth, and Timaru, and have been well attended.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

W. A. BANKS, Chairman.

#### OTAGO.

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Dunedin, 31st March, 1919.

I have the honour to present the following report of the Education Board of the District of Otago for the year 1918 :—

*Board.*—The personnel of the Board is the same as it was at the election in 1916, viz. : Urban Area—Messrs. William R. Brugh, Robert H. S. Todd, James Wallace, and James H. Wilkinson; North Ward—Messrs. Donald Borrie and George Livingstone; Central Ward—Messrs. James Horn and James Smith; South Ward—Hon. D. T. Fleming and Mr. Parker McKinlay, M.A. At the biennial election in 1918 the members for the Urban Area and the Central and South Wards were returned unopposed, and Mr. Borrie was re-elected for the Northern Ward. Mr. James Wallace was elected Chairman. Thirty-six meetings of the Board have been held, the average attendance being nine. The following were the Board's representatives on various educational bodies: Council of the University of Otago—Mr. P. McKinlay, M.A.; Otago High Schools' Board