

*Manual and Technical.*—Instruction in elementary handwork (paperwork, cardboard, plasticine, modelling, brushwork, &c.), was imparted in practically all the schools in the district. Cookery and woodwork were carried on in ten centres, forty-four schools participating in the instruction. Swimming and life-saving classes for S4 pupils were held at the Dunedin Municipal Baths. Classes for pupils above S3 were held at the Oamaru Municipal Baths, and also at Alexandra, Coal Creek, and Tapanui. The average attendances at the special classes were: Cookery, 1,319; woodwork, 1,375; swimming and life-saving, 1,347.

*Agricultural Instruction.*—Each succeeding year adds to the number of schools at which elementary agricultural instruction is interwoven with the other subjects of the curriculum, and the total now stands at 205. The work has in many cases been very gratifying in both its educative effect and tangible result. The number of pupils receiving instruction in the subject was 2,638. It is further pleasing to note the increasing number of schools at which the agricultural and nature-study work is finding concrete expression in the beautifying of the school grounds. With the general appreciation of the result of effort in this direction on the most impressionable element in the community, it is confidently anticipated that the work already begun will be extended in all the schools of the district. The Department has also granted funds for the establishment of a third manual training centre in Dunedin (at the Arthur Street School). The expenditure on manual and technical instruction was: Salaries, material, &c., for school classes, £5,126 10s. 4d., and for special classes, £1,394 15s. 8d.; buildings, furniture, and fittings, £784 17s 10d.; total, £7,306 3s. 10d.; being an increase of £913 3s. 10d. over the previous year. The excess of expenditure over capitation earned and receipts from other sources was £174 3s. 2d. The Board is glad to learn that the Department is now seriously considering the introduction of a general scale of salaries for woodwork, home science, and agricultural instructors employed by Boards, and the making of special appropriations to meet the cost of same, instead of Boards having to finance these payments as at present out of uncertain capitation revenue.

*Public-school Certificates.*—There were 1,768 candidates from the public schools for proficiency certificates. Of these, 1,356, or 77 per cent., were successful, and 172 gained certificates of competency. These results are lower by 3 per cent. than those of the previous year.

*School Libraries.*—During the year fifty-five School Committees received subsidies on local contributions for purchasing approved books for school libraries, and pictures for the adornment of the school-walls. Fifteen book-cases were supplied free by the Board. The total value of the Board's contribution in money and book-cases was £162 17s. 8d. The Board continues to invite School Committees and teachers to participate in its scheme of subsidies for providing suitable reading-matter for the pupils.

*Free School-books.*—These were supplied to the following extent: In necessitous cases, £85 10s.; to pupils coming from other education districts where different books were used. £33 1s. 2d.

*Training College.*—There were 129 students in the College at the end of 1919, viz.: Second-year students (14 men and 35 women), total 49; first-year students (15 men and 63 women), total 78. Of these, 88 were from Otago, 21 from Southland, 17 from Canterbury, and 1 from the North Island. Bursaries, lodging-allowances, and travelling-expenses paid to students amounted to £11,346 3s. 5d., college fees to £900 7s. 6d.; total, £12,246 10s. 11d. The difficulties encountered by the students from outside Dunedin in procuring suitable lodging-accommodation have emphasized more than ever before the urgent necessity that exists for the immediate provision of an up-to-date hostel, and the Board cannot refrain from expressing its dissatisfaction concerning the Government's delay in performing its clear duty in this matter. In view of the large increase in the number of students admitted to the College for the current year, it has been found necessary to provide additional accommodation of a temporary nature. The number in attendance is now far beyond the capacity of the present building, and an extension on a large scale is a necessity of the immediate future. The Principal in his report pleads for the provision of a third or even a fourth year's course for those students who have proved themselves worthy of it, and also for the establishment in the Dominion of a proper agricultural college at which many of those granted extended bursaries may attend, and from which might be drawn a much-needed supply of trained agricultural instructors. From its experience the Board can testify to the regrettable fact that trained agricultural teachers are practically unobtainable in the Dominion. The Principal also points out that but little advantage is taken by graduates who intend to be secondary or home-science teachers of the provision made for their admission to the Training College, and laments the fact that "such teachers go to their work, which is teaching, prepared in everything except the art of teaching."

*Truancy and Irregular Attendance.*—The Board's Truant Officer found it necessary to serve 298 notices on parents and guardians for infringements of the Act; 243 cases were investigated owing to illness and other reasons; and 35 penalty summonses were issued, convictions being obtained in all cases. The fines and costs for the year amounted to £14 14s. At the end of last year 128 pupils left the city and suburban schools who did not pass S6, forty-nine left who had passed only S4, sixteen who had passed only S3, and eight who had passed only S2. All of these had reached the exemption age—viz., fourteen years. During the year the matter of the employment before and after school hours of boys under fourteen years on milk-carts, paper runs, &c., has engaged the attention of the Board. From a report submitted by the Truant Officer it appeared that boys attending the city and suburban schools so engaged numbered 365; more than half of them had to rise very early in the morning, their wages ranging from 12s. 6d. to 1s. per week. For the highest rate of wages quoted some of the boys worked about thirty-eight hours per week. The Board has no hesitation in stating its firm opinion that in the majority of cases here referred to the children are being defrauded of their educational heritage. The economical difficulties bound up in the question should not deter the Government from facing the problem and endeavouring, by legislative restrictions and the granting of financial aid in approved necessitous cases, to secure the removal of the hindrances which now impede these children's proper participation in the education provided by the State.

*Physical Instruction.*—The Department's scheme of physical exercises has formed part of the course of instruction of all schools in the district. The Board notices that the Inspectors of Schools in their report express regret that the school gymnasiums and their equipment are now practically unused owing to the adoption exclusively of "free exercises," and recommend the judicious use of the gymnastic apparatus available at many of the schools.