

it cannot be said that any appreciable reduction in the cost of the work has as yet taken place. An honest effort is being made to overtake all work authorized, but progress is slow, although the labour difficulty seems now less acute. Increasing attendance at St. Clair School had to be met by the erection of two additional class-rooms, and at Forbury School two extra rooms were provided by extending and subdividing two rooms. The four rooms affected by this alteration have been remodelled, and their lighting, ventilation, and seating improved. A new school was erected at Merino Downs to replace one destroyed by fire. Two infant-rooms at Oamaru South School were enlarged, and shelter-sheds taken down and re-erected. A new brick residence has been erected for the teacher at Clyde, and a small cottage for the teacher at Otanomomo. A two-roomed cottage was purchased and removed to Tapui to provide housing for the teacher. Two unused rooms at the Blue Spur School were taken down, and the material is being used in carrying our work at other schools. Buildings for manual training are in course of erection at Alexandra and at Arthur Street, Dunedin. At the Training College a fairly extensive alteration had to be made to provide a retiring-room and study for the male students, and a much larger work, consisting of an additional story upon the Training College building, was started in November, this extra accommodation being rendered necessary by the great increase in the number of students now admitted to the College. Improvements in the way of better conveniences, extra shelter-sheds, asphalted grounds, erecting concrete tanks and drinking-fountains, fencing and draining, have been carried out at many schools, and several residences have been improved by small alterations in the way of providing additional comforts and labour-saving appliances. The Board has also given greater attention to the matter of improving the lighting and ventilation of class-rooms, and efforts in this direction have been much appreciated by teachers and scholars.

Buildings Maintenance.—Although the departmental grants for this purpose have been considerably increased during the past few years, the cost of labour and materials has mounted to such an extent that the funds at the disposal of the Board are found to be quite inadequate. The Board is compelled to urge that the grants be still further augmented in order that it may be able to maintain in a reasonably satisfactory condition the buildings under its control.

Home-science Students.—At the request of the University Council, students completing their degree or diploma course in home science at the University of Otago have been allowed to attend the North Dunedin manual-training centre for practice in cookery-teaching.

Organizing Teachers.—There are now three of these teachers working in this district—in the Lower Clutha, Central, and Catlin's districts respectively. Each supervises from twelve to fifteen schools. The work involved is always strenuous and often depressing, but its benefit to the untrained and inexperienced teachers of the schools visited cannot be overestimated.

Increase in Teachers' Salaries.—For many years past the Board has emphasized the necessity for higher emolument for the teachers in the public schools, and it now desires to express its appreciation of the substantial increases in salaries which the Minister has been able to provide for all grades. It believes that the new rates are, for the most part, adequate, and should attract to the teaching profession the best material available in the Dominion. At the 31st December last eighty-nine teachers were receiving salaries of £180 per annum or under; 241 from £181 to £250; eighty-six from £251 to £300; eighty from £301 to £350; fifty-nine from £351 to £400; twenty-seven from £401 to £450; and twenty-nine over £450.

Superannuation.—The Board reaffirms its opinion that as a matter of simple justice to teachers training-college service should, for all teachers, be counted as service for pension purposes, and that if this is not permissible as the law at present stands, the necessary legislation to provide for it should be introduced at the earliest opportunity.

Special classes for pupil-teachers, probationers, and uncertificated teachers were conducted in Dunedin in the subjects of drawing, hygiene, vocal music, ambulance and first aid, and practical agriculture. Ambulance and first-aid classes were also held at Alexandra and Kaitangata. Half fees were paid for correspondence classes taken by fifteen uncertificated teachers whose work was favourably reported on.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

J. WALLACE, Chairman.

SOUTHLAND.

SIR,—

Invercargill, 31st March, 1921.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, the Education Board of the District of Southland has the honour to submit the following report of its proceedings for the year 1920:—

The Board.—The members in office at the beginning of the year were Messrs. J. C. Thomson (Chairman), D. Gilchrist, F. W. Gresham, J. MacGibbon, G. F. Johnson, A. H. Nichol, P. A. de la Perrelle, and J. D. Trotter. The members retiring by rotation in the month of July were Messrs. D. Gilchrist, J. MacGibbon, J. C. Thomson, and J. D. Trotter. At the election held in the same month Messrs. J. C. Thomson, West Ward (unopposed), J. D. Trotter, Central Ward (unopposed), H. E. Niven, East Ward, and F. W. Preddy, Invercargill Urban Area, were returned. An election of a member for the Invercargill Urban Area and the East Ward was held in November to fill the extraordinary vacancies on the Board caused by the resignations of Messrs. F. W. Gresham and A. J. Nichol respectively, the voting resulting in the election of Mr. F. G. Blake (unopposed) for Invercargill Urban Area, and Mr. H. Smith for East Ward.

The Board's representation on other educational bodies was as follows: Southland Boys' and Girls' High Schools Board—Messrs. J. C. Thomson and P. A. de la Perrelle; Gore High School Board—Messrs. J. D. Trotter, H. Smith, and H. E. Niven; Southland Technical College Board—Messrs. H. E. Niven, J. C. Thomson, H. D. Trotter, W. Riddell, F. A. Webb, and A. L. Wyllie, M.A.; Otago University Council—Mr. J. C. Thomson; Dunedin Training College Committee of Advice—Mr. J. C. Thomson. During the year the Board held thirteen meetings (twelve ordinary and one special), and the Executive Committee, which consists of all the members of the Board, met twenty-