

Schools.—The number of schools in operation at the end of the year, including twenty-one aided schools, was 222, classified under the Act of 1914 as follows:—

Grade 0 (1 to 8), 6 (all of which were aided schools); Grade 1 (9 to 20), 61 (of which 12 were aided schools); Grade 2 (21 to 35), 45 (of which 3 were aided schools); Grade 3 (36 to 80), 71; Grade 4 (121 to 240), 15; Grade 5 (241 to 400), 9; Grade 6 (401 to 500), 5; Grade 7 (above 500), 10.

The following table shows the number of schools, the number of children on the rolls, the number in average attendance, and the percentage of attendance for each year since 1878 (printed in ten-yearly periods only):—

Year.	District Schools.	Aided Schools.	Total of Schools.	Mean Average for Year.		Percentage.
				On Roll End of Quarter.	Average Attendance.	
1878	106	4	110	13,781	9,641	69·96
1888	155	1	156	20,301	15,920	78·41
1898	186	16	202	20,836	17,580	84·37
1908	195	14	209	19,942	17,536	87·94
1915	201	21	222	Weekly Roll. 23,267	20,812	89·45

School Staffs.—The number of teachers at the end of 1915 was 679, including 134 pupil-teachers and probationers.

Maintenance.—The total expenditure on primary salaries under the new scale that came into operation on 1st January, 1915, including £1,697 18s. for house allowances and £799 2s. 4d. for relieving teachers, was £102,488 16s. 7d., being an increase of £11,655 17s. 7d. as compared with the previous year. The salaries paid to teachers in secondary departments amounted to £3,394 1s. 6d., being an increase of £247 9s. 2d. on the amount paid for the previous year. The grants to School Committees for incidental and other expenses amounted to £8,203 9s. 5d., including the special grant of £1,020 towards the cost of small repairs.

Training College.—The Principal's report [see Appendix D of E.—2] gives the number of students that entered for training during the year, also the results of the annual examinations. In view of the large number of students seeking admission, the need for a new training college becomes more urgent each year. The Board, while recognizing the difficulty in which the Minister is placed owing to the necessity for strict economy in the expenditure of public funds, trusts that the application already made for the necessary grant for a new training college will be kept in the forefront of those regarded as most urgent.

Scholarships.—Under the Education Act, 1914, no provision has been made for Education Boards to award scholarships other than National Scholarships of both classes, junior and senior; consequently the Board's regulations have become superseded by regulations issued by the Department, under which all candidates who qualify and are otherwise eligible are now awarded scholarships. While recognizing the generous nature of this provision, the Board has felt it necessary to draw attention to the fact that had the new regulations been in force during the last three years, very few of the successful candidates of Group B (36–160) would have received scholarships. It appears to the Board that some concession should be made to candidates from such schools, where the disabilities, owing to long distances to travel and to employment in farm and in domestic duties, are much the same as in the case of children competing from sole-charge schools. There were ten candidates for the two Gammack Scholarships awarded annually by the Board.

Manual and Technical Instruction.—The total expenditure on manual and technical instruction during the year, including payments made to Associated Boards of Managers, amounted to £15,144 6s. 1d., being an increase of £1,601 0s. 6d. over that of the previous year. The total number on the roll of the Christchurch technical classes has been 1,566, as against 1,709 in the year 1914, the decline being doubtless the result of the grave crisis through which the Empire is passing. At Ashburton, the next largest centre, the number of individual students attending technical classes during the year was 429, as against 446 for the preceding year. At Kaiapoi the local Managers report that the attendance at most of the classes has been satisfactory, whilst at the smaller centres the work has continued on much the same lines as in previous years. The numbers in attendance from some of the older schools have notably increased, while pupils have come for the first time from several schools in the outlying suburbs. One extremely gratifying feature, the Director reports, has been the extraordinarily good attendance. At the Normal centre the second year's course for boys has been made to include metalwork, thereby increasing the variety of exercises and at the same time giving the pupils experience in another material. In view of the number of classes to be accommodated, and of the difficulty in arranging a time-table to meet the convenience of the several schools, the provision of another centre is urgently required and cannot be delayed much longer. At the smaller centres the instruction has been chiefly confined to cookery, dressmaking, and woodwork.

Elementary Agriculture.—It is to be regretted that the past year has seen a further falling-off in the number of recognized classes in elementary agriculture, there being now 105 classes as against 126 in 1914 and 136 in 1913. The decrease, Mr. Martin reports, is entirely attributable to sole-charge schools dropping the subject. The rural course was continued at Darfield, Oxford, Lincoln, Kaikoura, a commencement being also made at Kaiapoi. Except at Lincoln, adequate facilities for practical