

at Darfield, Kaiapoi, Kaikoura, Lincoln, Oxford, Pleasant Point, Temuka, and Waimate, while it is expected to be introduced during the present year at Akaroa, Geraldine, Greymouth, and Hokitika. In the southern portion of the district definite educative results have been obtained by the testing of several varieties of lucerne, green-manuring with mustard, ryecorn, and vetches, and by variety tests with mangels and potatoes. Mr. Moodie also reports that in fruit-tree culture and nursery-work the majority of the teachers in his district have now a good grasp of the subject, the results on the whole being most gratifying. Mr. Moodie further reports that there is ample evidence of a real live interest in the work not only by teachers and pupils, but also by parents as well. In proportion to the enlarged sphere of operations it has been necessary for the Board to increase its special staff of instructors. The Board regrets that owing to ill health, consequent upon the strain and physical injury suffered during his period of service with the Expeditionary Forces, Mr. B. Moodie, who was appointed assistant instructor towards the close of the year, has been compelled to send in his resignation.

The War.—During the year 1916 sixteen teachers, five Training College students, and two members of the Board's office staff joined the Expeditionary Forces, making altogether sixty-six (forty-six teachers, eighteen students, and two members of the office staff) who have taken part in the defence of the Empire. At the date of this report sixteen additional teachers have joined the Forces since the 1st January.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

C. H. OPIE, Chairman

OTAGO.

SIR,—

Education Office, Dunedin, 31st March, 1917.

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 1916:—

Board.—At the beginning of the year the Board was constituted as follows: North Ward—Messrs. Donald Borrie, James Mitchell, and George Livingstone (elected in the room of Mr. Andrew McKerrow, deceased); Central Ward—Messrs. William Scott, James Wallace, and William R. Brugh (elected in the room of Mr. G. C. Israel, deceased); South Ward—Messrs. D. T. Fleming, Parker McKinlay, M.A., and James Smith. The alteration of the wards, rendered necessary under the provisions of the Education Act, 1914, and the Education Amendment Act, 1915 (No. 2), took effect on the 8th August, 1916, and the elections held in accordance with these Acts resulted in the return of the following members: Urban Area—Messrs. William R. Brugh, James Wallace, James H. Wilkinson, and Robert H. S. Todd; North Ward—Messrs. George Livingstone and Donald Borrie; Central Ward—Messrs. James Smith and James Horn; South Ward—Messrs. David T. Fleming and Parker McKinlay, M.A. The Board is thus composed of ten members instead of nine as previously. At the first meeting of the new Board in August Mr. D. T. Fleming was elected Chairman. 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—Messrs. D. T. Fleming and William R. Brugh; Waitaki High Schools Board—Mr. James Mitchell; Boards of Management of Associated (Technical) Classes—Dunedin, Messrs. P. McKinlay, M.A., James Wallace, and W. R. Brugh; Oamaru, Messrs. James Mitchell and F. S. Aldred; Milton, Messrs. P. McKinlay, M.A., and W. B. Graham.

Number of Schools.—The number of schools in operation at the 31st December, 1916, was 261, being an increase of four on the figures for the previous year. Two were half-time schools, seven were household schools, and one was the small school at the Pleasant Valley Sanatorium. Nineteen had an average attendance below 9, seventy-three from 9 to 20, fifty-nine from 21 to 35, fifty-seven from 36 to 80, fifteen from 81 to 120, six from 121 to 160, five from 161 to 200, two from 201 to 240, three from 241 to 280, seven from 321 to 360, one from 401 to 450, two from 451 to 500, four from 501 to 550, three from 551 to 600, and five from 601 to 650. Household schools were started at Wilden, Barewood, and Killermont, and the household school at Shannon was discontinued.

Teachers.—On the 31st December there were in the Board's service 756 teachers, classified as under:—

	Males.	Females.	Totals.
Head teachers	105	5	110
Sole teachers	24	127	151
Assistant teachers	57	268	325
Total of adult teachers	186	400	586
Pupil-teachers	25	52	77
Probationers	12	41	53
Teachers of needlework	...	17	17
Manual and technical (special teachers)	14	9	23
Totals for 1916	237	519	756
Totals for 1915	250	492	742
Increase for 1916	—13	27	14

The permanent teachers absent on military service were classed as follows: Head teachers, 3; sole teachers, 13; assistant teachers, 14; pupil-teachers, 3; M. and T. (special teacher), 1; total, 34. There were fifteen male teachers and sixteen female teachers acting as substitutes for those absent on military duty. For the past two years the ratio of male to female teachers has been: Adult teachers—1915, 100 males to 175 females; 1916, 100 males to 215 females. Pupil-teachers and probationers—1915, 100 males to 321 females; 1916, 100 males to 251 females.