

was taken up at 379 schools by 27,352 pupils. Considerable extension has taken place in regard to advanced handwork; there are now twenty-two manual-training centres where pupils are taught woodwork, cookery, and domestic economy. A new manual-training centre was established at Geraldine, and the new rooms at Oxford proved a great convenience. Manual-training centres were re-established at Greymouth and Hokitika. Swimming and life-saving received due attention during the year; seventy-five classes were established, with an attendance of over a thousand pupils. Rural courses of instruction were carried out at ten district high schools in the district.

War conditions generally affected the attendances at technical and continuation classes, especially in the country districts. Courses of instruction, however, were carried on at the following technical schools: Waimate, Temuka, Timaru, Geraldine, Ashburton, Greymouth, Kaiapoi, and Hokitika; whilst individual technical and continuation classes have been carried on at Fairlie, Blackball, Kaikoura, Akaroa, Doyleston, Leeston, and Lakeside. Teachers' classes have been carried on at Christchurch, Timaru, and Greymouth; these classes have been well attended, and the instruction given has been much appreciated. Although much has been done, much more remains to be done, and, profiting by the experience of the past year's work, the Board hopes to considerably extend the manual and technical work during the incoming year.

*Agriculture.*—There has been a material increase in the interest taken in agriculture, and the schools in North Canterbury have been graded according to the quality of the work done. Mr. McFarlane, of Springburn, generously donated a shield to be awarded to the school making the most progress during any year, and this year the shield has been won by the Carleton School.

*The War.*—During the year 1917 twenty-four teachers and seven Training College students have joined the Expeditionary Forces, making a total since the outbreak of war of 109 (eighty-two teachers, twenty-five students, and two members of the office staff).

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

C. H. OPIE, Chairman.

#### OTAGO.

SIR,—

Education Office, Dunedin, 31st March, 1918.

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 1917:—

*Board.*—The constitution of the Board remained unaltered from the previous year, 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—Messrs. David T. Fleming (Chairman) and Parker McKinlay, M.A. 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. W. R. Brugh, P. McKinlay, M.A., and James Wallace; Oamaru, Mr. James Mitchell; Milton, Messrs. P. McKinlay, M.A., and W. B. Graham.

*Number of Schools.*—The number of schools in operation at the 31st December, 1917, was 261, the same as in the previous year. Two were half-time schools and eight were household schools. Fifteen had an average attendance below 9, seventy-five from 9 to 20, sixty-two from 21 to 35, fifty-nine from 36 to 80, eleven from 81 to 120, eight from 121 to 160, five from 161 to 200, nine from 201 to 360, five from 361 to 500, and twelve over 500.

*Teachers.*—On the 31st December there were in the Board's service 748 teachers, classified as under:—

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Head teachers ... ..	100	4	104
Sole teachers ... ..	21	134	155
Assistant teachers ... ..	54	261	315
Total of adult teachers ... ..	175	399	574
Pupil-teachers ... ..	27	55	82
Probationers ... ..	11	43	54
Teachers of needlework ... ..	...	17	17
Manual and technical (special teachers) ... ..	13	8	21
Totals for 1917 ... ..	226	522	748

The permanent teachers absent on military service were: Head teachers, 3; sole teachers, 13; assistant teachers, 18; pupil-teacher, 1; manual and technical (special teacher), 1; total, 36. There were fifteen male teachers and twenty female teachers acting as substitutes for those absent on military duty. For the past two years the ratio of male to female teachers employed in Otago has been: Adult teachers—1916, 100 males to 215 females; 1917, 100 males to 228 females. Pupil-teachers and probationers—1916, 100 males to 251 females; 1917, 100 males to 258 females. During the year eighty-nine appointments of teachers were made by the Board. There were fourteen male and seventeen female pupil-teachers appointed, and five male and twenty-five female