

members of the teaching profession. During the year the Board informed several uncertificated teachers who have been in the service several years that, unless they succeeded in passing some part of the Teachers' D Examination at the first opportunity, the question of terminating their engagement as teachers under the Board would be considered. For some years past this Education Board, in common with most other Education Boards in the Dominion, has experienced great difficulty in obtaining the services of male pupil-teachers. The reason for this state of affairs is plain. To induce our youths to enter the teaching profession the monetary inducements offered should be increased, otherwise they will seek more lucrative spheres of employment.

*Instruction of Teachers.*—During the year Saturday classes for the training of teachers were carried on for a period of twenty-six weeks. The subjects of instruction and the numbers of students in each subject were as follows: Drawing (three classes), 87; vocal music (two classes), 46; needlework (two classes), 54; agriculture (two classes), 37; mathematics, 13; English, 16; card-board work, 30; school method, 19; hygiene (three classes), 89; elocution, 12. In addition a class in drawing for town pupil-teachers and probationers met on two afternoons a week for a period of thirty-eight weeks, the roll number being thirty-two. The attendance of students was in nearly all cases very satisfactory, and the results of the examinations conducted by the instructors indicated that with only a few exceptions the students had been doing their best to profit by the instruction provided. As regards those teachers who, in consequence of the remoteness of their schools, were unable to attend Saturday classes, and who were dependent therefore upon instruction by correspondence, eight intimated their intention to take advantage of the assistance granted by the Department to correspondence students.

*Scholarships.*—The annual examination of candidates for Junior National and Senior National Scholarships took place in November. For the Junior National Scholarship Examination there were 101 candidates, three more than in 1916, and for the Senior forty-two candidates, seven less than in 1916. Nineteen Junior Scholarships and three Senior Scholarships were awarded. The amount disbursed during the year in respect of scholarships was £908 8s. 4d.

*Medical Inspection.*—During the year the Department's Medical Inspector of Schools, accompanied by the Department's school nurse, visited the larger schools in this district and medically examined the pupils of Standard II. The Board trusts that the day is not far distant when the Medical Inspector will be able to visit every school and examine all the children, especially those in the remote parts of the district. In one or two cases the Inspector visited schools when an epidemic was prevalent and examined every child.

*Physical Instruction.*—During the months of January and September the Department's physical instructors visited Invercargill and conducted classes in physical training. Practically the whole of the Board's teaching staff has now had a course of physical training. The Inspectors report that physical instruction is given regularly, especially in regard to deep breathing and free exercises. Most of the Board's teachers are taking up this branch of instruction with marked earnestness, and the Board is convinced that physical training in conjunction with the medical inspection of schools will be of incalculable benefit to the present generation of school-children.

*Conveyance and Boarding-allowance.*—During the year the sum of £1,645 11s. 6d. was paid under this head, an increase of £300 as compared with last year's payments. Again the Board draws the Department's attention to the injustice of excluding the riding of horses and bicycles from the means of conveyance on account of which the allowance will be made. Under the present regulation the Department allows only half-rates for the conveyance of children between five years and seven years of age, the other half being paid by the Board out of its general fund. The Board is strongly of the opinion that the full allowance should be paid by the Department in all cases, especially in view of the fact that if parents did not avail themselves of this provision for educating their children the Department would in all probability be called upon to establish additional schools.

*Subsidies on Voluntary Contributions.*—During the year several School Committees took advantage of the regulations regarding the payment of subsidies on voluntary contributions. Under these regulations these Committees were enabled to supplement their allowances for incidental expenses, and thus secure assistance towards the cost of improvements to school-grounds, establishment of school libraries, &c.

*Certificates.*—806 pupils were presented for examination in the subjects of the Sixth Standard. Of these, 529 gained proficiency certificates; 142 gained competency certificates; while 135 failed—percentages of 65·5, 17·5, and 17 respectively.

*Board's Regulations.*—In consequence of the coming into operation of the Education Act, 1914, the Board found it necessary to revise its regulations, the compilation of which entailed much thought and careful consideration on the part of the Board members and officials.

*School Committees.*—Once again the Board desires to place on record its hearty appreciation of the manner in which the majority of School Committees continue to co-operate with it in the administration of educational matters in this district. During the year the incidental allowances paid to School Committees have totalled £4,028 10s., a sum of £476 in excess of the amount paid to the Board by the Department. The increased amount has been paid to schools up to and including Grade III. In addition to the above-stated amount, the Board is pleased to announce that the Department has authorized a supplementary grant for School Committees' incidental expenses during the period of the war. This additional payment will be made along with the ordinary quarterly allowance in March of the current year. In view of the great increase in the cost of fuel and cleaning the additional grant will be welcomed by School Committees, especially those in the backblocks, who have not the opportunity of augmenting their funds by means of concerts, &c.