

classes continued for a period of two weeks, and were attended by teachers who had not previously attended such a course and who had previously attended, but who would benefit from a refresher course. These classes were open to females only, owing to the fact that the services of a male instructor were not available.

Conveyance and Board of Children.—The total amount paid by the Board under this head was £1,465 7s. 2d. Conveyance allowance amounting to £1,406 12s. 2d. was paid in respect of 314 children, and boarding-allowance amounting to £58 15s. in respect of thirteen children who require to live away from home in order to attend school. Of the improvements made by the Department in the new regulations regarding the conveyance and board of children, the following may be noted: (1) The extension of the allowance for conveyance whereby full payment will be made on account of children between five and seven years of age; (2) the payment, under certain conditions, of the allowance to children who ride on horseback to school; and (3) the payment of increased allowance for boarding from 2s. 6d. to 5s. per week.

Supplementary Readers.—Out of the grant received from the Department for supplementary readers the Board early in the current year supplied each pupil in Standards V and VI with a copy of Arnold's "Far Afield" and Marryat's "The Children of the New Forest" respectively. The cost of purchasing and distributing the books amounted to £263 9s. 1d.

Subsidies on Voluntary Contributions.—The Board is pleased to report a substantial increase in the number of School Committees who took advantage during the year of the provision made in the regulations for the payment of subsidies on voluntary contributions. The amount raised by Committees during the year by voluntary contributions, &c., amounted to £345, an increase of £230 17s. 4d. as compared with the amount raised in 1917. The payment of subsidies on voluntary contributions has enabled many Committees to carry out necessary improvements to their school-grounds.

School Committees.—The Board continues to pay to Committees for incidental expenses a sum considerably in excess of the amount paid to the Board by the Department. The amount disbursed to Committees during the year was £4,720 13s. 2d. Included in this amount was the supplementary grant received from the Department to cover the increased cost of fuel, &c. The Board is pleased to report that for the current year the amount of the supplementary grant is considerably in excess of the amount paid last year. This additional payment will be made along with the ordinary quarterly allowance for March quarter.

Buildings.—During the year new schools were erected at Waimatua and Haldane; additions were built to the Gore, Waimumu, Waihopai, St. George (twice), and Invercargill Middle. The new Manual-training School in Don Street was also completed, and is recognized as one of the most up-to-date in the Dominion. The works now in hand are: Additions to schools at Waituna and Clifden; the reinstatement of the school at Makarewa (destroyed by fire); and the erection of a new residence at Tuatapere. Extensive alterations to the residence at Rimu were also undertaken. The Board has continued its policy of erecting new buildings or additions to existing buildings and of effecting repairs with its own staff of workmen, with satisfactory results, although it was found that owing to the ever-increasing cost of materials and of workmen's wages the total cost in all cases was slightly in excess of the amount granted by the Department. Application has been made for the extra cost, which doubtless will be forthcoming. The periodical overhaul of existing buildings has been kept well in hand. During the year the school building at Glenham was destroyed by fire, while a portion of the Waihopai (Side) School similarly suffered. Improvements to school-grounds, under the supervision of the architect, have been carried out at Rimu, Waianiwa, and Myross Bush, while extensive improvements are now being effected at Gore. The above-mentioned improvements could not have been undertaken had the Committees not taken advantage of the Government subsidy on voluntary contributions. It would be to the mutual benefit of all concerned if more of the Committees took advantage of the system under which such subsidies are payable.

The War.—Since the last report was written the Board regrets to have to report that three teachers have made the supreme sacrifice. Altogether seven members of the Board's teaching staff have given their lives on behalf of the Empire.

Board Rules.—In order to comply with the conditions under which the Department was prepared to pay increased capitation to cover the cost of sick relieving-work the Board amended its rule, No. 70, which now reads as follows:—

"During any period of twelve months the following periods, either in one or more portions, shall be allowed to a teacher during illness which renders him incapable of attending to his duties; and every application for sick-leave must be accompanied by a medical or other certificate satisfactory to the Board. The Board may, however, give special consideration to teachers having special claims. Payment of salary shall not be allowed to any teacher who is absent on account of illness unless such teacher has been for twelve months continuously in the employment of the Board.

Period of Service.	Maximum Sick-pay.
" Under five years	One month's full pay.
Five years and under ten years	One month's full pay, followed by one month's half-pay.
Ten years and over	Two months' full pay."

Financial.—The receipts from all sources for the year 1918 were £96,243 5s. 10d., and the expenditure was £99,185 1s. 3d. In connection with the foregoing figures it has to be pointed out that the excess of expenditure over receipts is due to (1) heavy expenditure on stock, (2) the erection of the new manual school, and (3) the fact that there is a balance owing in connection with several grants not yet received from the Department. During the current year the rebuilding account will be largely drawn on to replace worn-out school buildings at Winton and Invercargill South, and the re-erection of the Makarewa School recently destroyed by fire. For these works a partial grant in aid will be provided by the Department.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington,

J. C. THOMSON, Chairman.