

Manual and Technical Instruction.—The numbers under instruction in the following recognized classes were,—

	Schools.	Pupils.
Agriculture	126	2,865
Home science	78	2,744
Woodwork	59	2,823
Handwork	257	23,275
Swimming and life-saving	24	2,358

The Board wishes again to emphasize the importance of swimming, and commends those who at considerable inconvenience have given efficient instruction to their pupils.

Scholarships.—There were current at the end of 1921 thirty senior and sixty-seven junior scholarships. On the 31st December, 1921, eight senior and fifteen junior scholarships expired. On the results of the 1921-22 examinations twenty-two senior and twenty junior scholarships were awarded.

Special Schools.—The school at Trentham for children under treatment, chiefly for infantile paralysis, and the class at Thorndon for children of defective speech and hearing, have shown good results, fulfilling the educational requirements in a way that indicates extremely capable management. Pupils in the Thorndon class have been drawn from various parts of the city, and a number of adults have benefited from the specialized training of the staff. Sixty-eight children have benefited by the treatment since the class was established in 1920.

Medical and Dental Service.—The schools medical and nursing service continues to confer substantial benefit on the young, and the establishment of a schools dental clinic in Wellington for both training and treatment marks a notable advance. The work of this Department is greatly assisted by the friendly co-operation and keen interest of School Committees, teaching staff, and mothers. The interest of mothers is growing steadily, and friendly conference has materially assisted. The policy of the clinic is to deal with (a) children both under and of school age, no child being too young; (b) cases of pain treated on recommendation of the head teacher; (c) indigent cases introduced by the school nurse.

School Libraries.—The Wellington City schools' library scheme continues to grow in usefulness under the efficient guidance of the City Librarian and staff. It embraced last year no less than thirty of our largest schools, and quite one-third of the children of the education district. To these 105 separate collections were supplied, comprising 8,867 volumes. In successive years the number of individual loans were 70,419, 103,508, and 110,232. It is to be added that an examination of the lists shows a taste both varied and healthy. A second scheme, a country one—the Featherston County schools scheme—may also be reported as a gratifying success, largely owing to three factors—namely, the enthusiasm of the promoters, the general recognition by County Councils, Town Councils, School Committees, and individuals that the scheme merited support, and the sterling work of those who have been charged with the duties of management. Well over £300 was spent in books. The Board found the book-cases. The managers are making inquiries with a view to the supply of pictures. The Board commends the plan to other districts, especially the remoter ones.

Finance.—There was on deposit with the Public Trustee and the Bank of New Zealand on the 31st December, 1921, a total sum of £10,000. On that date there was a debit balance on the current account amounting to £4,157 19s. 2d., because Government grants due to the Board were not received until 1922. Unpresented cheques amounted to £614 18s. 11d. The net balance to credit on the 31st December, 1921, was £5,227 1s. 11d. The receipts for the year amounted to £397,302 5s., and the payments to £403,802 15s. 8d. The excess of payments over receipts was £6,500 10s. 8d.

Buildings.—With a slight downward tendency, the prices were still high. Though only necessary, and, for the most part, urgent work was undertaken, the year was one of much activity. The leeway of the war period has, however, not nearly been overtaken, and the periodical overhaul of buildings is still in arrears, nor has it been possible to touch the interiors of any except a very few of the worst buildings. For reasons of real economy and sound management the amount devoted to maintenance of buildings must be materially increased, and it must be recognized that in a very large number of cases the cost of rebuilding must be faced, and of renewing much of the older furniture. In this connection it may be noted that nine of the schools of Greater Wellington are from forty to forty-five years old. It has been only with substantial expenditure and great care that the rebuilding of such schools as Mount Cook, Te Aro, Kaiwarra, Newtown, &c., has been deferred. The chief works of the year were the following: To replace buildings destroyed by fire at Te Ore Ore (side school) and Martinborough, excellent buildings in reinforced concrete; Featherston, rebuilding on new site; erection of small new schools in wood at Newlands, Poroporo, and Morningson (removable type). Additions were erected at Manakau (one room), Kilbirnie Infants' (concrete), and Shannon Infants' (wood), Muritai (brick), Masterton West (concrete); and for secondary departments at Levin and Eketahuna; removal of old school to new site at Johnsonville; erection of a residence at Hamua. Maintenance overhauls and improvements, more or less extensive, were undertaken at twenty-nine schools and nineteen residences. Shelter-sheds were built or rebuilt at five schools, improvements to sanitary service at nine schools, asphaltting and fencing at ten. There were approaching completion schools at South Miramar (six rooms), Te Aro Infants (five rooms), Hutt Technical (three rooms). Very urgent works for the immediate future are new schools at Ngaumu, Mirza, Poroutawhao, Silverstream, and infant departments at Petone West and Clyde Quay; new schools at Kaiwarra; Mount Cook consolidation; additions at Carterton, Hataitai, and Dillon's Point; remodelling of Springlands. The Board appreciates the support of the Department in acquirement of new sites in growing districts, especially suburban. The Board is strongly of opinion that where the future of a city or suburban area is assured land should be acquired ahead of settlement as giving choice of position and low purchase price. The Board has assisted in the acquirement of sites to the limit of its means.