

lost through inclement weather. The year was marked by changes of an administrative character in the carrying-on of the work.

Some form of elementary handwork was taken up at all the Board's schools; about 38,000 pupils received instruction. At thirty-three schools with no female teacher on the staff instruction in needlework was given by special mistresses. Advanced handwork again received attention; 2,835 pupils received instruction in woodwork, and 2,832 girls took cookery and domestic science. Phillipstown manual-training building opened in March last with an attendance of 864 pupils. Seventy-one classes were carried on for swimming and life-saving.

Agriculture.—The interest in agriculture and nature-study was again well maintained; some fine experimental work was done at the twelve district high schools in the district. There was evidence during the year of an increased interest in agricultural education on the Coast.

Technical and Continuation Classes.—These classes were carried on at all the centres in the district wherever there was a demand for instruction. The work done by the Ellesmere Technical Association calls for special commendation.

Teachers' Classes.—Classes in agriculture, hygiene, drawing, &c., for pupil-teachers, probationers, and uncertificated teachers were carried on at Christchurch, Greymouth, and Timaru. Correspondence classes for teachers in the outlying parts of the district were conducted by the staff of the Training College, and were well taken advantage of.

School Attendance.—In his annual report the attendance officer (Canterbury) points out that the names of children sent in owing to irregular attendance are decreasing in number, continual visits to parents and schools having had a good effect. Health conditions have been good, and the year has been free of anything approaching an epidemic. During the year eighty-three cases were taken into Court, including those connected with the Ashburton Technical School. Fines imposed amounted to £20 19s., carrying costs totalling £21 2s. The attendance officer (West Coast) continued his visits to schools and parents' homes. In all 332 ordinary notices and thirty-one of a final nature were issued. In two cases summonses were issued and convictions obtained. The Board has impressed upon its attendance officer for this district the necessity of his pushing to a conclusion all cases in which habitual irregular attendance is in evidence.

G. W. ARMITAGE, Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

OTAGO.

SIR,—

Dunedin, 31st March, 1922.

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 1921 :—

Board.—There has been no change in the personnel of the Board since the election in 1916. The members now in office are: Urban Area—Messrs. W. 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, M.P., and James Smith; South Ward—Hon. D. T. Fleming, M.L.C., and Mr. Parker McKinlay, M.A. Mr. James Wallace continues to fill the office of Chairman. Thirty-six meetings of the Board have been held. 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—Hon. D. T. Fleming, M.L.C., and Mr. W. R. Brugh; Waitaki High Schools' Board—Mr. James Mitchell. Boards of Management of Associated (Technical) Classes: Dunedin—Messrs. James Wallace, James Horn, M.P., and J. H. Wilkinson; Oamaru—Messrs. George Livingstone and James Mitchell; Milton—Mr. John Bowie, B.A.

Number of Schools.—The number of schools open at the end of the year (including four household schools) was 254, or one more than in the previous year. Thirteen had an average below 9, eighty from 9 to 20, fifty-four from 21 to 35, fifty-five from 36 to 80, sixteen from 81 to 120, six from 121 to 160, four from 161 to 200, nine from 201 to 360, four from 361 to 480, and thirteen over 480. With respect to staffs of the schools: 147 schools (considerably over half of the total) were one-teacher schools, fifty-five had two adult teachers, twenty-two had three adult teachers, and thirty had four or more adult teachers.

Attendance of Pupils.—The average roll, average attendance, and percentage of average attendance for the year were 21,991, 20,275, and 92.2 respectively. The attendance during the year was much affected by epidemics, especially by diphtheria, quite a number of schools finding it necessary to close for longer or shorter periods. Weather conditions during the spring months of the year were also unfavourable for the attendance of the younger children. The figures show an increase over the previous year of 10 in the roll number, 796 in the average attendance, and 3.57 in the percentage of attendance.