

Finance.—The income for the year amounted to £298,445 4s. 3d., and the expenditure to £298,972 0s. 3d. On the 31st December, 1928, the credit balances in special accounts totalled £8,204 1s. 5d., and in the General Account £6,893 12s. 1d. The main items of expenditure are shown below :—

	£	s.	d.	Increase. £	s.	d.
Teachers' salaries and allowances	171,061	19	3	739	15	9
Payments to School Committees for incidental expenses	10,001	4	3	49	18	3
New buildings	18,901	16	10	10,054	12	9
Maintenance of buildings	15,123	7	1	64	1	5
Administration	4,449	1	6	223	14	5

The credit in General Account has been reduced by £894 13s., but this is more than explained by the payment to the Department of £1,200 in respect of new-building adjustments.

General.—The Inspectors criticize the quality of the cleaning of both schoolrooms and out-houses in many of the smaller schools. The Board knows that the trouble arises in most cases through the dearth of suitable labour. Fault-finding of the cleaner (very often a member of a Committeeman's family) is a delicate matter in a small community, and so indifferent service is suffered as the lesser of two evils. The Board, however, agrees with the Inspectors that no difficulty should be allowed to stand in the way of adequate hygienic and sanitary measures, and the matter will receive the Board's attention in all cases where the Inspectors report it.

Efficiency of Schools.—The Inspector's estimate of the general efficiency of the schools is as follows : Excellent or very good, 11 per cent. ; good, 43 per cent. ; very fair, 35 per cent. ; fair, 10 per cent. ; weak, 1 per cent. This reveals a decrease of 7 per cent. in the "good" category and an increase of 6 per cent. in the two lowest groups.

Elementary Agriculture.—It is now seventeen years since special instructors in agriculture were appointed in Otago, and the good results which have accrued from this recognition of the importance of the subject are apparent to all. Mr. E. S. Green, one of the two original instructors appointed, is still the Board's senior instructor, and the Board is fortunate in having a man of his calibre to direct the work. The school-gardens exhibit is a feature of the Winter Show in Dunedin, and abundant evidence to the public that good practical work is being accomplished. It is a pleasure to Board members when visiting schools to observe the increasing number which have plans in hand for beautifying the grounds.

School Buildings.—The following new works were completed during the year: Additions to Caversham, St. Clair, and North-east Harbour; new schools at Warrington, Queensberry, and Pukerangi; and a new residence at Oamaru South. Remodelling received attention at the following schools: Normal, Roxburgh, Anderson's Bay, Teaneraki, Alexandra (infant department), Green Island (infant department), Outram (infant department), and Glenomaru (residence). New school-sites were acquired at Tomahawk and Tainui, while extensions to sites were made at Alexandra, Oamaru South, and Roxburgh. The following school properties no longer required were disposed of: Evansdale, Rongahere, Tiaeri Ferry, Wetherstones, and the Oamaru South old residence, and certain sections. The Crookston glebe was also sold. A great deal of remodelling-work is urgently required in a number of city schools, as well as the larger country schools. The improvements effected at such schools as Port Chalmers, Tokomairiro, and the Normal serve to emphasize the uncongenial conditions existing in so many of the older buildings. Teachers in the remodelled schools keenly appreciate their new surroundings, and they are naturally the envy of those who must still carry on under the old order. Special reference is made to the Normal School, which is now furnished and equipped as befits such a school. The headmaster's plans required an expenditure much beyond the limits of the usual remodelling grant, but he was able to realize his plans almost in their entirety through the devoting of locally raised money to the purpose, part of which the Board and the Department were pleased to subsidize. The Board is glad to be able to record finality in the matter of the Albany Street site. Nothing should now stand in the way of a grant for the new school at an early date.

Replacement of Long Desks.—The Board appreciates the Department's grant of £500 for this purpose. The expenditure on dual desks and infant-room furniture amounted to £1,493 10s. 6d., contributed as follows: Grant from Department, £500; contributions by Committees, £184; Government subsidies, £124 11s.; Board's Maintenance Fund, £684 19s. 6d. While the Department's policy is to provide dual desks, the Board is very favourably impressed with the single tables and chairs supplied to the Normal School. More elasticity is possible in giving the child a table and chair of a size suited to his needs. Students passing through the College will see the many advantages of tables and chairs, and when they eventually go out to their own schools they will be prone to think that even dual desks are out of date.

Training College.—The staff has been strengthened by the appointment of a full-time kindergarten lecturer and a lecturer in school music. The appointment of Mr. L. F. de Berry as headmaster of the Normal School is a decided acquisition to the staff. The Principal reports that the system of third-year specialization makes demands on the accommodation, and that there is urgent need for two small class-rooms.

Conveyance and Board of Children.—At the end of the year the number of children in receipt of allowances was as follows: Conveyance allowance, 788 (increase, 70); horseback allowance, 10 (increase, 3); boarding-allowance, 74 (increase, 7): total, 872. The total cost of the above services was £5,606 18s. 11d. There are now twenty-seven special conveyance services. The Department provided the full cost of thirteen contracts; but on the remaining fourteen, providing for 166 children, the Board required to find £330 7s. 4d. from its General Fund—a decrease of £175 8s. 2d. compared with last year. During recent years ten schools have been closed and the children conveyed to larger