

CANTERBURY.

(Chairman, Mr. C. S. THOMPSON.)

Elementary Handwork in Primary Schools.—For the first time since the application of the emergency economy measures in education, handwork material was provided by the Department for use in the schools. The quantity supplied, however, was not sufficient to cater adequately for the needs of the district, consequently it had to be distributed on a very much reduced *pro rata* basis compared with pre-depression years. As yet there is no sign of a restoration of the capitation which was hitherto available for the payment of sewing mistresses at small schools staffed only by male teachers. In a few cases ladies of the district carried on the instruction voluntarily, and the Board's thanks are due to those who assisted in this direction.

Technical Classes at Small Centres.—Although the day of technical classes at small centres is passing, due to the rapid mechanization of farming activities and other causes, classes in subjects such as dress-making, wool-classing, sheep-shearing, and woodwork were again conducted at Rangiora, Temuka, and Kaiapoi. Some difficulty was experienced in financing these classes. It was felt that if the Department's policy of deducting students' fees from the capitation earned were discontinued this disability would largely disappear.

Manual Training.—Two new manual-training centres were established in Christchurch during the year, one at Christchurch West and one at Shirley. Their establishment, apart from the local advantage, has made for a more even distribution of the manual-training pupils attending Christchurch centres.

During the year extensive renovations were carried out at various manual-training centres, and where necessary additional equipment was provided.

Physical Instruction.—The Board is gratified at the work which has been carried out under the direction of Mr. H. E. Longworth and Miss J. Brownlie. Special attention is now given to organized games, opportunities for enjoyment of which have brought a fuller school life to many children. Members would like to testify to the tact and energy with which the instructors have carried out their duties.

Consolidation.—It is evident that parents are beginning to realize the benefits derived from consolidation. In the near future it is hoped that several small schools will unite in this way and thus provide improved educational facilities.

School Committees.—The Board desires to thank School Committees for the assistance rendered by them in the administration of the Act. In many cases those responsible for the local management of schools have shown a resourcefulness and self-help beyond all praise, especially in the improvement and maintenance of grounds. In this way they have provided a valuable object-lesson by making their premises artistic and cheerful, notwithstanding the drawbacks and disappointments met with owing to the unsatisfactory financial conditions prevailing. (It would be a distinct encouragement to Education Boards and School Committees if the subsidy system were restored.)

OTAGO.

(Chairman, Mr. J. WALLACE.)

Training of Teachers.—In last year's report the opinion was expressed that the case for the reinstatement of training facilities in each University centre would be very much stronger in 1936 when the normal number of students would be again in training. The Education Board's Association, at its annual conference, supported the request for the reopening of the colleges, and efforts were made throughout the year to secure a favourable decision from the Government. It was not until after the General Election, when a new Government was in office, that the announcement came that the Dunedin Training College would be reopened in 1936. This welcome intimation brought to a close four years' unrelenting effort in which the Board had the backing of all sections of the community throughout Otago and Southland.

During the year fifty Otago students attended the Christchurch Training College—forty-one representing our own quota and nine as part of the Wellington quota.

Milk for School-children.—Ten town schools supplied milk to the children, the Board again assisting the School Committees in meeting the cost of free milk in all necessitous cases.

School Committees.—The School Committees continue to do good work in the filling of a very necessary part in local education administration. Men of vision and progress are to be found on most Committees, and they willingly give their time and energy to the work of improving the school and its surroundings. In cases where Committees confine their work to little more than the disbursement of the incidental grant, it is usually found that the teacher has not placed before them a programme of improvements.

It is too early yet to judge whether or not the biennial election has tended to lessen interest in school-committee work. This Board favours the annual meeting of householders with the retirement of a proportion of members annually.

It is evident that many Committees do not find the Incidental Grant sufficient for the purposes it is expected to cover. On the other hand, quite as many Committees appear to find no difficulty in balancing their General Account without local aid. It would seem that a uniform increase all