

round would not be the best solution. Many local factors must be taken into account, such as proximity to fuel-supply, severity of winter, scarcity of suitable labour for cleaning, and so on. An additional amount placed at the disposal of each Board would result in assistance being given where it was most required.

The amount paid to School Committees for incidental expenses was £9,607. Last year thirty-eight Committees suffered a reduction in the Incidental Grant, and this year a further twenty-seven; while over the two years only fourteen received increases.

School Libraries.—The gradual depletion of stocks of continuous readers through the withdrawal of the Government grant over a period of five years caused the Board to make a special offer to School Committees of a subsidy at the rate of £2 for £1. Practically every Committee took advantage of the offer, which entailed an expenditure of £292 10s. 6d. from the Board's General Fund. The usual library subsidy of up to £2 10s. per annum to any one school was also available, but subsidies claimed totalled only £67 6s. 10d.

SOUTHLAND.

(Chairman, Mr. S. RICE.)

Special School.—Some difficulty was experienced during the year in maintaining a maximum roll number at the "Isabella Dryburgh" School. In two or three cases parents did not take the advantages of the special instruction which was offered, and consequently for a great part of the year the maximum number of sixteen was not maintained. However, a waiting-list has now been provided, and it is hoped to make necessary transfers with as little delay as possible.

Unemployed Teachers.—The need for the rationing-scheme appears to have disappeared, and the Board was pleased to learn that it was proposed to revert to payment of probationary and substituted assistants and relieving teachers at regulation rates. At the beginning of the year seventy-four teachers, sixteen male and fifty-eight female, were employed under the rationing-scheme. At the end of the year sixty were similarly employed, thirteen having been appointed to permanent positions. It is anticipated that before the end of 1936 there will be a shortage of teachers in this district.

Woodwork and Home Science.—Each year the Board has found it necessary to exclude certain schools from the manual-class time-table. This has caused a little dissatisfaction among parents who wish their children to receive instruction in woodwork and cookery. It is hoped to submit a scheme to your Department whereby all schools within a reasonable distance of a centre may receive instruction. The scheme will mean the appointment of assistant instructors, but it will not involve an increase in accommodation or equipment.

Health Camp.—A permanent health-camp site has been established at Oamui, fifteen miles from Invercargill. The camp was made possible by the interest of local citizens, and the Board has assisted in supplying materials, blackboards, &c., and finding suitable teachers so that school-time has not been lost. The Board is pleased to report that the children attending the camp have shown a great improvement in health.

Milk in Schools.—The introduction of a daily milk ration to the children of the town schools has met with general approval. Here again the movement has been fostered by local citizens, and an Invercargill Primary Schools Milk Fund has been established. The town members of the Board have been associated with the movement and have given valuable assistance. The greatest difficulty, of course, is that of finance, and the Board would respectfully draw your attention to this matter with a view to making a special grant for this purpose each year.