

In the post-primary schools the situation is equally pressing. The roll numbers for 1942 to 1947 were (without counting part-time students):—

1942	..	..	33,000	1945	..	..	44,500
1943	..	..	35,500	1946	..	..	45,500
1944	..	..	41,000	1947	..	..	45,000

Estimated roll numbers from 1948 to 1952 are—

1948	..	..	48,000	1951	..	..	48,000
1949	..	..	47,600	1952	..	..	50,500
1950	..	..	47,900				

If the present shortage of class-rooms due to wartime conditions is taken into consideration, it is estimated that an additional 325 class-rooms, as well as all necessary specialist rooms, will be required in post-primary schools by 1952. In view of current shortages of labour and materials the situation is not an easy one to meet satisfactorily.

The problem of accommodation is paralleled by that of finding teachers. The Department has for many years been training far more teachers than would be lost by normal wastage in ordinary times, but the number of resignations, particularly due to the marriage of women teachers, has been much higher than could have been anticipated. I shall mention later some of the steps that are being taken to meet the situation; but there is one complicating factor that is not always realized: the young teachers on whom we must rely to meet the peak rolls of the early 1950's will be drawn from the age-group born in the early 1930's, when the number of births in New Zealand was the lowest for thirty years. There will be great competition for the services of this restricted age-group during the next few years.

Post-primary Education for All

The problems resulting from the increased number of births, difficult though they may be, are largely quantitative in character, and so are easier to solve than those arising from the increased *percentage* of the population going on to post-primary education. This latter group is not concerned only with more teachers and more buildings: it involves essential changes in the very nature of post-primary education. My predecessor in office (the Hon. H. G. R. Mason) has dealt with these topics year by year in his reports, but the whole matter is so important and is so closely tied up with the recent public discussion on standards of work in the schools that I feel justified in restating the case here.

The following table shows, at five-year intervals between the years 1917 and 1946, the number and the percentage of primary-school leavers who expressed their intention of going on to some form of post-primary education. This is the only form in which strictly comparable figures are available over the period, but experience has shown that there is a close correlation between such expressed intentions and subsequent actual destinations:—

Numbers and Percentages of Pupils leaving Public Primary and Intermediate Schools and Departments intending to go on to Post-primary Schools

—			1917.	1922.	1927.	1932.	1937.	1942.	1946.
Number	..	..	5,489	7,737	11,871	12,154	14,933	16,370	17,783
Percentage of total leaving	..	..	37	47	50	55	65	70	85