

TEACHERS.—On the 31st December there were 571 teachers in the Board's service, classed as follows: Head teachers, 92 males, no females; sole teachers, 34 males, 104 females—total, 138; assistants, 43 males, 171 females—total, 214; assistants (secondary departments, district high schools), 10 males, 6 females—total, 16; relieving-teacher, 1 male, no female; pupil-teachers, 26 males, 33 females—total, 59; teachers of needlework, no males, 24 females; Training College and Normal School, 6 males, 10 females—total, 16; teacher of gymnastics, 1 male; manual and technical (special teachers), 7 males, 3 females—total, 10: totals, 220 males, 351 females—grand total, 571.

In December, 1907, there were in the service of the Board 74 adult teachers who were uncertificated or who did not hold a license to teach. This is an increase of 10 since the previous year and of 35 since December, 1905. Of the number employed, 16 were males and 58 were females. Four males and 36 females were employed in schools with an average attendance below 16, 2 males and 7 females in schools from 16 to 20, 2 males and 1 female in schools from 21 to 25, 3 males in schools from 26 to 32, 2 males from 33 to 40, 1 male in a school from 61 to 75, while 1 male and 14 females held positions as assistant teachers in various schools from 41 to 570. In addition to these there were 18 teachers who had a license to teach.

Of the uncertificated teachers, 53 were untrained, 9 had attended the Training College, 6 had been pupil-teachers, and 6 had been pupil-teachers and had attended the Training College. An analysis of the salaries received by these teachers shows that 18 received not over £55, 3 received over £55 but not over £65, 8 received over £65 but not over £75, 21 received over £75 but not over £85, 24 received over £85.

The majority of the uncertificated teachers are with more or less diligence preparing for examination, but a few are making little or no effort to improve their qualification and acquire a definite status in the profession. Uncertificated teachers should remember that the Board cannot give them permanent appointments. The Board, in consideration of good service rendered in emergency, will not willingly terminate their engagements; but it must, in all fairness, consider the claims for employment of all fully qualified teachers, and in any case an uncertificated teacher cannot look for promotion in competition with those who are certificated. With the approval of the Board the Inspectors organized classes for the benefit of uncertificated teachers and teachers who desired higher classification. A very fair number availed themselves of these classes, and the results of the recent certificate examination have fully justified their existence. Should sufficient inducement be offered, similar classes will be organized to prepare for the examinations in January, 1909. The number of pupil-teachers employed was 26 males and 33 females—total, 59. This is a decrease from the previous year of 1 male and 8 females—total, 9; and a decrease from 1905 of 1 male and 24 females—total, 25. There is a strong inclination on the part of School Committees and head teachers to obtain the services of a junior assistant instead of two pupil-teachers, and in most instances the Inspectors have recommended the appointment of an assistant.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The annual examinations for the Junior National Scholarships and the Board's Junior and Senior Scholarships were held, as formerly, in the month of December. Of the 51 competitors for the four Junior National Scholarships, 30 passed the examination and 21 failed. The scholarships were awarded as follows: For schools with an average attendance not exceeding 40, 1; for schools with an average attendance of between 40 and 200, 1; other schools, 2. Of the 112 competitors for the Board's Junior Scholarships, 64 passed the examination and 48 failed, while the whole of the 27 competitors for the Board's Senior Scholarships passed the examination. Thirteen Junior and eleven Senior Scholarships were awarded. Of those who gained the Board's Junior Scholarships 6 were girls and 7 were boys, while of the successful competitors for the Board's Senior Scholarships 4 were girls and 7 were boys. Nine of the Senior Scholarship winners had previously held Junior Board's Scholarships, and two had held Junior National Scholarships. The Scholarships current at the end of the year were: Board's Junior—males 20, females 13, total 33; Board's Senior—males 24, females 10, total 34; Junior National—males 11, no females: total, 78.

ATTENDANCE.—At the end of the year there were 233 schools, 571 teachers, and 19,183 pupils on the rolls of the schools. The figures relating to average attendance show an increase over the district of fifty-four pupils for the year. The average attendance expressed as a percentage of the weekly roll was 89, being an increase of 0.4 per cent. for the year. If the mean weekly roll for the district be taken as 19,221, the average percentage gained implies that 17,152 pupils attended every school day and that 2,069 were absent. Although, relatively to the other districts, Otago has for years maintained a very high standard of regularity of attendance—and indeed from 1901 to 1905 stood at the head of the list of all the districts—it cannot be supposed that the percentage of average attendance to roll-number which we have attained is as satisfactory as it might be. To a certain extent the irregularity of attendance is due to the prevalence of measles, scarlet fever, and other ills incidental to childhood, and also in the country districts to bad roads and distance from school, but much of it is certainly preventable, and if parents were impressed as they ought to be with a due sense of the hindrance to their children's educational progress occasioned by irregular attendance, they would see to it that, as far as possible, all cause of complaint in this matter were removed. In Dunedin the percentage of average attendance was 91, and it cannot be contended that, with all the educational facilities which the city affords, there should not be fewer than 9 out of every 100 children absent every school day. In many cases head teachers have not availed themselves of the services of the Truant Officer as they might have done, and in consequence the educational interests of the district have suffered.

INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS.—The Inspectors' general report and their reports on the district high schools will be found in E.—1b. There is a decrease in the roll-number of nearly 0.9 per cent., more than a third of it being in Standard VII. Of the 1,439 pupils who were present in Standard VI, 945, or 66 per cent., obtained the certificate of proficiency. The schools are grouped according to efficiency as follows: Good to very good, 43 per cent.; satisfactory, 47 per cent.; fair, 9 per