

Teachers.—At the end of the year there were in the Board's service 432 teachers. The following table will show the distribution of the teaching staff in the schools in this education district:—

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Head teachers	55	25	80
Sole teachers	27	80	107
Assistants	16	141	157
Total of adult teachers	98	246	344
Junior teachers (pupil-teachers)	3	31	34
Probationers	2	25	27
Teachers of needlework		20	20
Manual and technical teachers	3	4	7
Total	106	326	432

Of the 344 adult primary-school teachers 214 held certificates, 11 held licenses to teach, while 119 were uncertificated. At the end of 1917 there were in the service of the Board 337 adult teachers, of whom 207 were certificated, 5 held licenses to teach, while the number of uncertificated teachers was 125. The percentage of fully certificated teachers was 62·2 for 1918, as compared with 61·4 in 1917. Included in the 119 teachers who are uncertificated are those who have passed the D or C examination but are unable to obtain their certificates until such time as they have complied with the condition regarding age, length of service, &c. In 1901 the number of male and female teachers was almost equal; at the end of 1918 the proportion of females to males was considerably over two to one. The Board views with alarm the steady decrease in the number of youths who are offering their services as pupil-teachers and probationers. At the end of 1909 there were forty-one female pupil-teachers and probationers and nineteen male; at the end of 1918 the figures show a proportion of eleven females to every male. The salaries at present paid are altogether inadequate as an inducement for promising lads to engage in this work. The best of the nation's youth are needed in the nation's schools, and in order to secure the best material for this branch of the Public Service the salary paid must be commensurate with the importance of education to the nation. As in the past, considerable difficulty has been experienced in obtaining the services of suitable teachers to take charge of the lower-grade country schools. On several occasions the Board has been compelled to readvertise vacancies three and four times owing to the absence of even partially qualified applicants. The Board hails with satisfaction the advent of a much-improved scale of salaries to come into operation on the 1st January, 1919. For the year 1918 the expenditure on teachers' salaries amounted to £61,210 12s. 6d., an increase of £1,986 7s. 1d. as compared with the previous year.

Instruction of Teachers.—The usual Saturday classes for the training of uncertificated teachers were conducted by the Board for two terms, the first of thirteen weeks and the second of twelve weeks. The subjects in which instruction was given and the roll numbers in each case were as follows: Drawing (three classes), 78; vocal music (two classes), 33; needlework (two classes), 44; hygiene (two classes), 38; agriculture (two classes), 46; school method, 6; mathematics, 7; English, 7; cardboard-work, 29. For the benefit of pupil-teachers and probationers in attendance at the town and suburban schools afternoon drawing classes were held twice a week for a period of thirty-eight weeks, the roll number being twenty-two. At the close of the first term the students in the Saturday classes were examined in the work undertaken, but the abrupt termination of the classes as a result of the influenza epidemic made it impossible to complete all the examinations on the work of the second term. In practically all cases, however, the students were reported to have made satisfactory progress. To help teachers unable to attend the Saturday classes by reason of the remoteness of their schools intimation was made that on certain conditions assistance would be available towards payment of fees for tuition by correspondence, but only eleven teachers signified their intention to take advantage of the help thus provided by the Department.

Scholarships.—The scholarships in tenure at the end of 1918 were—Junior National, 40; Senior National, 8. The amount paid to scholarship-holders during the year was £951. In the Senior Division the only candidate who qualified for a scholarship was a pupil of the Southland Girls' High School. The results in the Lower Division are not yet to hand.

Medical Inspection.—During the year the larger schools in this district were visited by Dr. McCahon and, after this lady was transferred to Auckland, by Dr. Collier. During their visits they were accompanied by the Department's school nurse. As stated in a previous report, the Board is strongly of the opinion that there is not yet a sufficient number of Medical Inspectors to carry out successfully the medical examination of school-children. Every school should be visited and every child examined. Furthermore, if the examination reveals a weakness in the child the parents should be compelled to seek the necessary medical treatment for their offspring. No time appears more opportune than the present for the extension of the system of medical inspection, including the dental treatment of our boys and girls. Financial obligations should not be allowed to stand in the way of such an extension of the scheme as will ensure that the rising generation grow up to vigorous manhood and womanhood.

School Dentists.—The Board notes with pleasure that the Minister has completed arrangements for the appointment of school dentists, whose duty it will be to visit the schools in the outlying districts and treat children at their own schools for a very moderate charge.

Physical Instruction.—The Department's physical instructors visited most of the larger schools during the year. Instruction in the physical exercises as laid down by the Department is regularly given in most of the schools in this district. The improved carriage of the pupils, as well as the general tone and discipline of our schools, bear eloquent testimony to the value of physical instruction. With the Medical Inspectors, school dentists, and physical instructors working hand in hand beneficial results must accrue. During the month of September training classes in physical instruction were conducted by the Department's physical instructors. These