

district in which the Board sat. Sittings were held in Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland, no session being required in Dunedin. Only twenty-one appeals against classification were proceeded with by appellants—six in Auckland, nine in Christchurch, and six in Wellington; of these, one appeal was not opposed by the grading officers, and three others were allowed by the Board, the remaining seventeen being unsuccessful. Considering the very many difficulties that presented themselves to those responsible for the substitution of an entirely new and clearly defined system of classification and staffing for the haphazard methods that had hitherto prevailed, it was very gratifying to find that the percentage of appellant teachers was so small. Several anomalies, natural consequences of the former conditions, still persist, but the number of these will gradually diminish, and their disappearance should in itself do much to reduce still further the present small percentage of appeals.

STAFFING.

So far a number of schools have been unable to fill all vacancies on the staff with teachers possessing the classification required by regulations. This difficulty is partly due to the fact that the supply of teachers in the higher grades is comparatively small, and partly to the disinclination of teachers, especially those who are married, to face the expense of removal from one town to another. Others, again, who have not completed their University work elect to remain in a large centre rather than seek promotion in some smaller town where they will have no opportunity of attending University lectures. The difficulty is to some extent inevitable during the early years of a new grading scheme; and as teachers complete the service necessary for the higher grades the number available will naturally increase. The provision by means of which teachers of exceptional merit may pass more rapidly through the various grades should also increase the supply. Since, for the reasons above indicated, schools in the smaller towns are chiefly affected, the situation might be relieved by offering more inducement to teachers to seek employment in these schools by granting a bonus, or by paying reasonable transfer expenses where such transfer is approved by the Department. The need for economy, however, is a serious obstacle in the way of this proposal, as, indeed, of any that involves increased expenditure. The grading-system has occasionally been condemned by reason of this difficulty in staffing, but, though teachers from time to time suggest modifications, the general feeling appears to be favourable towards it, as offering a definite prospect of promotion and a fairly clear view of ultimate possibilities. The lack of this view was one of the strongest reasons which formerly induced teachers to take up teaching temporarily and leave it as soon as possible for other professions. It was unfortunate that so shortly after the new scheme was launched financial stress seriously hindered its further progress, but the same stress has naturally reacted upon other professions, and in that way increased the supply of teachers. There is reason to hope that in normal times the salaries now offered for the higher positions will be sufficient to induce a large number of these teachers to adopt teaching as their life's work.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

Reference has previously been made in these reports to the need of training for secondary teachers. The position has not materially altered, and teachers of high academic qualifications but without teaching experience must frequently be placed in charge of junior classes. The effect upon pupils who leave highly trained and experienced teachers to begin their secondary work under such conditions is often apparent throughout their whole course. On the other hand, a certain number of applicants for grading have already passed through a training college, and it is desirable, as soon as the supply is sufficient, to admit no teacher to the secondary schools who is without training or experience. Valuable work of this character has already been accomplished in some of the larger schools where heads of departments have been appointed. These have arranged schemes of work, suggested methods of treatment, and criticized and directed the work of junior teachers.

TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

In May, 1921, the Secondary Schools Association and the Secondary Schools Assistants' Association decided to amalgamate. Hitherto Principals and assistants have, for the most part, met in separate bodies for the discussion of various matters connected with secondary education. In future they will meet annually in one association to deliberate upon topics of common interest. The change will make for closer co-operation between Principals and staffs, and consequent unity of effort in the cause of education. The Inspectors welcomed the invitation to be present at both conferences as a valuable opportunity of hearing the views of representative teachers.

GENERAL.

The improvement in the quality of teaching mentioned in the last report has been steadily maintained. Teachers, on the whole, display a growing interest in educational reform, and a readiness to discuss the comparative values of various methods of instruction. Meetings of the staff or of groups of teachers are held in most schools, in order to secure co-ordination and uniformity of teaching. While it is unnecessary to review what has already been given in inspection reports, certain features are worthy of special notice.

The tendency in most schools is to define more clearly the various courses of work open to the pupils, so that those who are not preparing to enter the professions or to take up University work may have a complete course suited to their needs and capable of accomplishment within the period