

The need for admitting so unusual a number of students necessitated lowering, in some cases, the standard of academic attainment. It is advisable to keep this standard as high as possible so as not to throw upon the Training Colleges work which should be done in the post-primary schools by the students before admission. Of equal, if not greater, importance is the need for securing a high standard of physique and personality, for these are in a sense natural gifts by no means so easily attainable by the students as academic knowledge. It is interesting to note that Scotland demands of all its men students a University degree as a qualification for admission. The majority of the women students possess a similar qualification.

In the larger and more rapidly growing centres of population it has been found difficult to secure a satisfactory number of well qualified students, but this is not the case in the South Island, which can supply more than its quota. The scarcity in the North Island can be ascribed to the much greater demands of industry, commerce, and the professions for the best products of our post-primary schools.

In general, it may be said that the remarks of those responsible for the selection of these students point to the necessity for more attention being given in the post-primary schools to the physique, speech, and general bearing of prospective teachers.

To each Training College there is attached a Normal School where the students receive practical training under the supervision of specially selected teachers. These Normal Schools, however, were established when the number of students in training was only a fraction of the present number. To avoid overcrowding the Normal Schools with student teachers, it was found necessary to call upon all neighbouring public primary and secondary schools to admit students for supervised teaching practice under specially nominated teachers. This system works fairly well, though it is not popular with a number of teachers, who consider that they should receive special remuneration for the work. A possible alternative would be the creation of additional Normal Schools in each centre. But the most outstanding defect of the Normal Schools is their inability to provide sufficient opportunities for training those students who will soon afterwards have to take charge of sole-teacher schools or act as assistants in two-teacher schools. City schools afford excellent practice in teaching a single class, but give the student little opportunity of handling a number of small classes at the one time. The Normal Schools have such facilities, but the students are so numerous that the amount of individual training each receives is necessarily inadequate. The situation is being relieved to some extent by the steady increase in the number of small schools which are being consolidated at convenient centres. The advisability of reintroducing the system of organizing teachers, which was abandoned during the recent economic depression, should now be reconsidered. These organizing teachers spent three to five days at a time in small, relatively inefficient schools, and thus were capable of giving much greater assistance than could possibly be given by an Inspector in his much more limited time. Such a system would enable the Inspectors to use their time to greater advantage.

#### SURPLUS TEACHERS.

During the year the policy of keeping all certificated teachers in employment was continued. In addition to the two or three hundred necessarily required as ordinary relieving teachers, a number were employed as additional assistants where circumstances were such as to make the regulation staffing inadequate to the situation. The remainder were employed as supernumerary teachers. These teachers thus enjoyed relatively favourable treatment compared with other younger people outside the Service inasmuch as they were kept in continuous employment in their own profession. It was understood, of course, that as soon as suitable permanent positions offered these supernumerary teachers would apply for them. Unfortunately this did not always happen in the case of positions in rural districts, for towards the end of the year Education Boards complained that advertisements for junior teachers in country schools sometimes evoked no response. It will, therefore, be necessary to take such steps as will ensure that the amenities of city life will not induce certain teachers to prefer relief work to the greater responsibilities of a permanent position. As close on 500 teachers were lost to the Service during the year, the surplus which had accumulated during past years has thus been reduced so considerably as to arouse doubts whether the supply will be adequate for 1937 without having recourse to teachers who have retired from the Service. It is not possible to equate supply and demand so that every teacher leaving the Training College can continue in permanent employment, since the 500 annual retirements from the profession are distributed more or less evenly through the year. If then the vacancies created by these retirements are to be filled promptly there must, of necessity, be a considerable number of teachers at the beginning of the school-year not in permanent positions. And as mentioned above, approximately 300 are required throughout the year to relieve permanent teachers absent for various reasons for varying periods. The hardships which these non-permanent teachers formerly suffered have been to a very considerable degree mitigated by keeping them all in some form of continuous employment till suitable permanent positions are available.

#### GRADING OF TEACHERS.

As the system of grading teachers has been the subject of criticism some comment may not be out of place. The system was introduced at the special request of the teachers, and for at least two purposes: to eliminate favouritism and patronage in the matter of appointments and to give every teacher the right to have his application for appointment considered on its merits, no matter where he lived or in which district he sought promotion. Under the previous system parochialism prevailed, and districts became watertight compartments, much to the disadvantage of teachers, particularly