

The total number of certificates granted was 2,416, as against 2,411 in the preceding year. Partial passes were obtained by 804 candidates. Of the subjects not prescribed for University Entrance book-keeping still maintains its popularity, with 98 candidates. Technical drawing and technical electricity were the only subjects showing increases, from 16 to 19 and from 10 to 13 respectively. Considerable decreases were shown in economics, physiology and hygiene, needlework, and shorthand and typing. The number of candidates offering applied mechanics and housecraft fell to 3 and 4 respectively.

Higher-leaving certificates to the number of 870 were awarded to pupils from departmental secondary and combined schools, with an additional 234 to pupils from endowed and registered private secondary schools. This represents a distinct increase over the corresponding numbers 746 and 158 for the year 1936, the increase being undoubtedly due to the fact that a higher-leaving certificate is once more a qualification for the award of a University bursary.

UNIVERSITY BURSARIES.

The number of those holding bursaries of all classes—University national bursaries and special bursaries—has now increased threefold. From 1931 to 1936 the number current had steadily decreased from 1,220 to 348, owing to the fact that in the years 1932 to 1936 University national bursaries were no longer awarded on a higher-leaving-certificate qualification, but only on the results of the University Entrance Scholarships Examination. In 1937 the higher-leaving certificate again became a qualification for the award of a University national bursary, with the result that in that year the total number of bursaries of all classes held by University students rose to 1,168. At the same time the maximum value of an "ordinary" bursary (a University national bursary without boarding-allowance) was raised from £10 to £20, while there was an award of 69 "boarding" bursaries, each entitling the holder to a boarding allowance of £30 in addition to the £20 allowance for fees of an "ordinary" bursary. Forty of these boarding bursaries are reserved for candidates who are not resident in a University town and who are compelled to live away from home in order to attend the nearest University College or recognized professional school. Provision has also been made for those who are resident in a University town and who, in order to prosecute their studies at a recognized professional school, are obliged to live away from home or who, from financial reasons, are unable to avail themselves of an ordinary bursary without further assistance.

These boarding bursaries are awarded on the results of the University Entrance Scholarships Examination or, if a sufficient number do not qualify in this manner, on the higher-leaving-certificate qualification. In 1937 no awards were made to candidates who possessed only the latter qualification.

The following table shows the increase in the number of bursaries awarded in 1937 and the increased expenditure under that heading:—

Class of Bursary.	Total current in 1936.	Expenditure for Calendar Year 1936.	Total current in 1937.	Expenditure for Calendar Year 1937.
		£		£
Agricultural	18	1,080	23	1,610
Architectural	6	357	4	226
Engineering	13	780	12	723
Fine arts	2	62	6	339
Home science	17	1,020	26	1,760
Ordinary	292	2,237	1,028	16,454
Boarding	..	..	69	1,870
	348	5,536	1,168	22,982

It is thus evident that the path to a University education has been made very much easier for a considerable number who would otherwise have found it difficult or impossible to attend University classes, and that the special circumstances of candidates living in the country or in the smaller towns and of those in need of monetary assistance have received particular attention.

FREE SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Towards the end of the year new regulations were issued governing the awards and tenure of free places in post-primary schools. These are conceived on very generous lines, and from 1938 onwards every child who has completed a primary-school course can proceed without let or hindrance into a secondary or technical school. Moreover, the old distinction between junior and senior free places has been done away with, and every child commencing his free education in a post-primary school now has the right to continue with it until he reaches the age of nineteen years.

This is in all probability a much more generous provision than is in force anywhere else in the world, and must result in increased roll numbers and therefore increased staffing. The schools will thus have an opportunity to enrich their curricula, so that pupils will have a choice of courses from which a selection may be made to suit the individual child. So far as the regulations deal with the syllabus of work, they continue to be definitely framed so as to give Principals as free a hand as possible, merely ensuring that a core of essential subjects shall not be neglected.