

already some Boards have made a beginning in this matter with the erection of class-rooms offering the maximum amount of ventilating-area, so that in time, with the gain of experience, we may hope for the gradual evolution of the ideal hygienic structure. Nowhere in New Zealand are conditions more favourable for the introduction of open class-rooms than in this district, and we look forward to seeing the extension of some such buildings as the Board proposes to erect in connection with the Tauranga District High School.

*Entrance to Training Colleges.*—Each year a number of pupil-teachers and probationers fail to qualify by examination for entrance to the training college. Owing to the difficulty of obtaining an adequate supply of teachers these young people almost invariably secure employment, and are sent out to country centres as assistants or sole teachers. We fully recognize the grave objections to lowering the attainments qualification for entrance to the training college, the level of which should tend to rise rather than fall as the years pass; but just now, when trained teachers are so urgently needed, we are of opinion that some relaxation of regulation whereby the candidates we refer to could be admitted to the training college would be a distinct gain to the community. These young people have already been through two or more years' training, and have reached a stage when the experience of the training college is most likely to be followed by the best results; they begin to teach without this experience, and many of them remain in the service. Having done so much towards equipping them for their future work, should not the State, in the interests of its children and in view of the existence of the necessary facilities, make it possible for them to complete the training already begun?

*Supply of Teachers.*—The difficulty of obtaining an adequate supply of efficient teachers has become increasingly great owing partly to the number of teachers who have enlisted for military service, and partly to the rapid expansion of settlement. The result has been that we have been obliged to sanction the appointment of a large proportion of uncertificated teachers, including a considerable number of those who under normal conditions would be regarded as inefficient, and would fail to secure employment.

*Training of Inexperienced Teachers.*—In this large and growing district, with so much out-lying settlement, no problem is more urgent than that of the training of inexperienced teachers. The output of the training college is rapidly absorbed, and we are obliged to accept the services of those absolutely without experience. The usual method of procedure is to allow a candidate for employment to attend a suitable school for a few weeks for observation and practice, and to require the head teacher to report on the candidate's general fitness for the work of teaching. If the report is favourable and the candidate is recommended by an Inspector he is informed accordingly, is allowed to apply for suitable vacancies, and frequently secures appointment. His teaching experience extends over only a few weeks, his knowledge equipment may be measured by a standard slightly in advance of that reached by a Sixth Class pupil, and his ability to manage a school is an unknown quantity, and yet we are obliged to accept his services or leave a number of our schools unstaffed. What opportunities have many of these teachers for improvement, and what chances have the unfortunate children of obtaining adequate training and instruction? It is true the teachers might attend the training college for short courses, but many of them have not sufficient knowledge or experience to profit by the training, and others are too poor to bear the necessary expense. The Inspector does what is possible to advise and help, but the limited time available for each school prevents him from giving the necessary assistance.

Several remedies suggest themselves. An increase in the number of Inspectors would enable more time to be devoted to visits of inspection, and hence greater assistance to be given where this was needed. A supply of organizing teachers specially selected for their ability to cope with the conditions described, whose work would consist in showing the inexperienced what is meant by successful method, and who would spend sufficient time at each school to be of real service to the teacher, would go far in the direction of promoting increased efficiency. The setting-up of observation schools with suitable staffs where promising beginners would have opportunity of noting the operation of approved management would probably be the most economic and effective way of dealing with this very important matter. In several of our former reports we have referred at some length to the need for the "observation school," and we would again urge the pressing claims of existing conditions for this or some similar remedy.

*Standard VI Certificates.*—The examination for the award of these certificates takes place towards the end of the year, and is confined for the most part to the subjects English and arithmetic. Regular and efficient instruction in other subjects is also demanded, but these, hitherto, have not been tested at the time of examination. In our last year's report we stated regretfully that there were good grounds for believing that in many schools, between the dates of the Inspector's visit-with-notice and the Sixth Standard examination, subjects other than English and arithmetic are very largely if not entirely neglected, a method of procedure quite contrary to the spirit and intention of the syllabus. We have hitherto refrained from setting papers in subjects carrying merit marks, believing as we do that these thrive best under treatment leading to oral tests; but our warning of last year appears in many cases to have borne but little fruit, and we are reluctantly obliged to announce that in future the written examination will from time to time include tests in the subjects referred to. The strictures embodied in this paragraph do not apply to all schools, many of which continue to work on full programmes throughout the entire year, but only to those schools whose teachers fail to realize their responsibility to syllabus-regulation and education demands.

*Promotion and Classification of Pupils.*—There are still an appreciable number of schools, both large and small, where pupils remain too long in the preparatory department, with the result that their progress through the classes is permanently retarded. The normal child—and the great majority of children are normal—should be able to dispose of the work of the preparatory department within two years, and teachers should realize how essential it is that no unnecessary delay should occur at any stage of the child's progress. It is not an uncommon experience to