

*Schools and Attendance.*—Nineteen small schools were closed, and eleven were opened or reopened, so that at the end of the year there were in operation 246 schools, a decrease of eight since the end of 1918. The average roll and average attendance numbers for the year were 24,785 and 22,692 respectively, as compared with 24,800 and 22,315 in 1918. The regularity of attendance was distinctly better than in 1918, when the epidemic occurred. In successive years there were in average attendance the following percentages of the average roll: 1919, 91·5; 1918, 90·0; 1917, 90·6; 1916, 89·2; 1915, 91·0. It was found necessary to take proceedings in eighty-eight cases of persistent irregularity. The convictions recorded were forty-two, and the remainder of the cases were withdrawn on condition of future regularity.

*Teaching Staff.*—The following were the numbers of teachers, pupil-teachers, and probationers in the service of the Board at the end of the year:—

	Head Teachers.			Sole Teachers.			Assistants.		
	Certificated.	Licensed.	Uncertificated.	Certificated.	Licensed.	Uncertificated.	Certificated.	Licensed.	Uncertificated.
Males ..	86	2	..	13	3	20	63	..	..
Females ..	9	..	..	39	4	70	297	4	43
Totals ..	95	2	..	52	7	90	360	4	43

  

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Certificated ..	162	345	507
Licensed ..	5	8	13
Uncertificated ..	20	113	133
Total adults ..	187	466	653
Junior teachers ..	13	36	49
Total teaching staff ..	200	502	702
Probationers ..	11	48	59
Grand totals ..	211	550	761

Including probationers, the staff numbers have increased by twenty-one (males, increase twenty-eight; females, decrease seven). The number of uncertificated teachers includes those who have passed the examination in whole or in part but have not yet been granted the certificate. Thirty-six of the former staff, including eighteen students, have not rejoined since their return from the war, and it was with much difficulty that, by reason of insufficient members, the service was maintained in efficiency.

*Instruction of Teachers.*—Arrangements were made for the following courses of instruction: (1.) Week-end classes for the benefit of teachers studying for the certificate were held at Wellington Training College and at Masterton. In addition, by arrangement with the headmasters in conference with the Inspectors, the pupil-teachers and probationers of Wellington and suburbs were taught each afternoon in central classes. (2.) The correspondence course was continued in Marlborough. (3.) Highly successful continuous courses embracing the D programme were held in December at Pongaroa (sixteen) and Blenheim (twenty-seven). (4.) A proposal to hold, as in former years, a fortnight's instruction in agriculture and nature-study at Masterton during the spring term holiday was, with reluctance, abandoned on account of the curtailment of the railway service.

*Training College.*—In the report of the Principal will be found a full description of the College work for the year. The following are the essential statistics of the institution: (1.) The total number of students was 155—31 men and 124 women. Seven of the men were absent on military service. (2.) First-year students, 86; second-year students, 69. (3.) Students classified—Division A, 123; B, 24; C, 4; D, 4. There were also admitted eleven returned soldiers, of whom four were without previous teaching experience. (4.) Districts—Wellington, 62; Hawke's Bay, 22; Taranaki, 15; Canterbury, 2; Auckland, 2; Wanganui, 43; Nelson, 8; Otago, 1.

*The Hostel.*—What more convincing evidence of the urgency of need for hostels could be adduced than the above figures furnish? To their credit be it recorded that three philanthropic institutions—the Friends' and the Students' Hostels and the Y.W.C.A.—provided accommodation for nearly one hundred of the young women, but there were still twenty women and all the men who had to find room for themselves. This year the numbers are substantially greater. In a city, to the State Departments of which hundreds of young people are annually drawn, thus filling up every available place suitable, or less than suitable, the accommodation for the student that is an essential condition of efficiency in study is not to be found. Over a year ago the Board, with the Victoria College Council, presented the facts. The case is unanswerable. There is, moreover, the almost equally urgent case of the junior female assistant. The case is now not less but much more urgent than before, the number of students being since the new year increased to 186 in all. It is inconceivable that the State will longer neglect a plain duty. The maximum of efficiency certainly cannot be reached until the question is faced.

*Report of Inspectors.*—In their report the Inspectors give the following general estimate of the efficiency of the schools of the district: Good to very good, 80 schools; satisfactory to good, 123 schools; fair to moderate, 34 schools; inferior, 6 schools. The schools in which the work is recorded as less than satisfactory are, with three exceptions, small aided schools for which it has been impossible to find teachers with even minimum experience. The standard of efficiency of the district as a whole has been well maintained. The Board is convinced that though in detail our system is capable of improvements, to the attainment of which the very best efforts of our educationists should be