

## SECTION 9.—MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.

During the year approximately 700 entrants to the teaching profession and 600 applicants for teachers' certificates were examined by school medical officers. The following are summaries of examination results in two districts, which serve to indicate the general position :—

- (1.) Candidates examined, 89. Of these 78 were accepted, 3 deferred, and 8 rejected. Of those accepted, 25 were classed as excellent, 36 as average, and 17 as fair. Special defects observed were as follows: Defective vision, 7 (2 corrected 5 uncorrected); deformity of chest, 5; deformed jaw, 1; enlarged tonsils, 2; disordered action of heart, 1; defective hearing, 1; goitre, medium, 1; dysmenorrhœa, 2. All had dental defect—that is to say, none presented a perfect set of teeth.
- (2.) Candidates examined, 109. Two were rejected. Of those accepted, 14 were classed as excellent, 85 as average, and 6 as fair. Of the candidates, 10 had defective vision, 1 had defective hearing, none had perfect teeth. The condition of the teeth was as follows: 34 had carious teeth, 77 showed fillings, 85 had had extractions of second teeth. Three had suffered from appendicitis, 1 from pleurisy, and 1 from tuberculosis of the lungs.

In view of the amount of sick-leave granted to teachers it becomes yearly more evident that a rigid exclusion of unsuitable candidates is an absolute necessity, and school medical officers are asked to take a high standard in deciding upon general fitness. Many candidates pass easily in those points where the standard is defined exactly, as vision and hearing, and may be free also from definite disease or deformity, but nevertheless are, in general physique, in probable resistance to disease, and in temperament quite unsuited for the profession. Under the most favourable conditions of life of a conscientious teacher is exceedingly arduous, and the strain is apt to become excessive when work must be carried out in overcrowded, wrongly planned schools. In addition, when not resident in their own homes, younger teachers are often obliged to live in an environment prejudicial to health. The hostels provided for training-college students are of great service.

*Physical Education.*—The work of the physical instructors is exceedingly valuable. Its influence on the physique of the children, by promoting correct posture and good carriage, and in affording education in the right habits of breathing, has been amply demonstrated.

The School Hygiene Division wishes to express appreciation to the Education Department, various Education Boards, School Committees, and teachers for much valuable co-operation.

A. G. PATERSON,  
Director, Division of School Hygiene.

## PART VI.—DENTAL HYGIENE.

In connection with the work of my division I beg to submit a report for the year ending 31st March, 1924 :—

## SECTION 1.—STAFF, TREATMENT, ACCOMMODATION, ETC.

## STAFF.

The allocation of the staff of the division is as follows: At the central training clinic Mr. Elliott is at present in charge, assisted by Miss Haines; while in the field there are eight qualified dental surgeons at the following centres: Two at Auckland, one at Wanganui, one at Nelson, one at Murchison, one at Christchurch, one at Timaru, one at Dunedin; together with twenty-five dental nurses, stationed as under: one at Auckland, one at Avondale, one at Whangarei, one at Hamilton, one at Huntly, one at Hunterville, two at New Plymouth, one at Wanganui, two at Napier; two at Palmerston North, one at Masterton, one at Lower Hutt, one at Motueka, one at Westport, one at Greymouth, one at Hokitika, one at Christchurch East, one at Clyde, one at Mosgiel, one at Dunedin, two at Invercargill.

Owing to the lack of patients at Rotorua it has been found necessary to transfer the nurses to New Plymouth temporarily. Miss West, dental nurse at Wanganui, has broken down in health and is at present on extended leave, while Miss Anderson, dental nurse at Clyde, has asked to be relieved of duty on account of her approaching marriage. This is very much to be regretted, as Miss Anderson is one of our most capable officers. The staff with very few exceptions have proved excellent officers, and the success of the nurses is very gratifying and is amply fulfilling expectations.

I regret to have to report the resignation of Mr. Dunn, who supervised the studies and training of the nurses, and has rendered very valuable service in this direction, and who, I feel, will be very difficult to replace.

*Staff in Training.*—At the present time we have two classes of probationers in training—(1) The class of fifteen (now reduced to thirteen), who commenced duty in October, 1922, and who will have completed their course in October next; these will be ready for drafting out at the end of the year or the beginning of 1925; (2) the new class of twenty-five students who commenced at the beginning of this month.

Of those who will complete training this year some will be required to fill vacancies occasioned by the loss of several of the officers placed last year, while no difficulty is anticipated in finding suitable locations for the remainder. These nurses, generally speaking, are quite up to the standard of the previous class, and there is no reason why they should not be equally successful in the field.