

mentality is too low for even special-class treatment. These associations are conducted entirely by voluntary workers. Classes in lip-reading for the partially deaf, and classes for those with speech defects, continue to give useful service. In the latter case pupils are encouraged to enrol in certain schools only, and a specialist in speech defects attends these schools for a certain number of hours each week. During the remainder of each day the pupil proceeds with his ordinary class-work. In some of the more important centres classes for physically undeveloped children have been established. The pupils are selected by the School Medical Officers, who also determine how long these pupils should remain in the classes. Teachers are appointed thereto by the Education Boards, but, in most other respects, the classes are organized by volunteer workers and maintained by voluntary donations. Such schools render very valuable assistance to the community.

#### PROBLEMS OF THE PROFESSION.

During the year discussion on professional matters was continued in all centres, the Inspectorate and Teaching Staffs co-operating in the common effort. The economic depression has, for various reasons, caused a quickening of educational thought and a corresponding desire to render the education system as efficient as possible. A striking proof of this was seen when six hundred teachers at their own expense spent a week of the May vacation at a refresher course organized by the Auckland Training College and Inspectorate. Where time and circumstances were favourable addresses to teachers were given at various centres. In some of these special concentration for the year on selected subjects was agreed upon, and exhibitions of school-work were held; and some teachers located in isolated districts received samples of work and forwarded their own work for assessment.

#### ENVIRONMENT.

The appearance of school-grounds is steadily improving, and the bare areas once so familiar are almost entirely things of the past. Not only are Education Boards and School Committees taking advantage of Scheme No. 5 to effect the absolute transformation of many relatively useless sites, but staff and pupils and agricultural instructors are co-operating in an increasing degree to add to the charm of the grounds. Within the schoolroom itself there is found a keener appreciation of the value of an artistic environment. Many infant departments are, in this respect, particularly bright and appealing. The silent influence of this improving environment is permeating life at many points. There is much greater respect for public property, thus enabling public authorities and business people to carry out beautifying schemes without fear of premature destruction; there is, too, an almost entire absence of that disfigurement of school buildings and offices that was so common and almost inevitable a generation ago. It may be said that the schools are preparing the country for a solid advance along the long of deliberately planning for a beautiful countryside, one more in keeping with the great possibilities it offers in this direction.

#### EXCHANGE OF TEACHERS.

During the year seven exchanges of teachers were made—six with England and one with South Africa. The usual exchanges were not effected with Canada, but similar negotiations with that country are proceeding favourably.

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The Director of Education, Wellington.

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