

Only three appeals were lodged by teachers against their classification. One of these was withdrawn, one was informal, while the third was allowed by consent, the teacher concerned having improved his academic status.

For the first time since 1929 the year shows an increase in the number of departmental secondary and combined schools, which now stands at forty and six respectively as against thirty-eight and six in 1935. The Christchurch West High School and the King's High School, Dunedin, were the two additions to the list. Only the latter, established to reduce the pressure on the Otago Boys' High School, was a new school. The former took the place, in the same building but under different control, of the West Christchurch District High School.

The school rolls continue to increase, the total rolls of the forty-six schools on 1st March being 18,960, as compared with 18,046 in the preceding year. More than half the increase is due, however, to the inclusion in this year's total of the Christchurch West High School. The roll number in December was again comparatively low (15,988), and although greater than the corresponding number for 1935 (15,622) represented a smaller percentage of the 1st March roll than in any year for the past ten years. The number of pupils residing in the school hostels showed a marked increase, from 1,133 in 1935 to 1,284 in 1936, but the total number of boarders is still 27 per cent. below the peak year (1929).

No registered private secondary school was added during the year to the list, which still remains at fifty-two. Their aggregate roll on 1st March was 4,451, as compared with 4,100 on the 1st March of the previous year.

FREE PLACES AND LEAVING CERTIFICATES.

The number of senior free places granted to pupils from departmental secondary and combined schools on the Principals' and Inspectors' recommendations was 3,962 (3,748 in 1935). Of the candidates who failed to obtain free places by this method, 278 sat for the Intermediate Examination in November, but only 44 of these—*i.e.*, 15.8 per cent.—succeeded in securing senior free places by passing the examination.

The recently instituted School Certificate Examination has been held for a third time in conjunction with the University Entrance Examination. As was explained in the report for the year 1934, the number of candidates sitting for the certificate only, as apart from the University Entrance, cannot be expected to increase appreciably until purely certificate courses become more firmly established in our schools. For the conjoint examination 4,132 candidates sat, as against 4,307 in 1935; the number of those who sat for the certificate alone fell slightly from 285 to 233. Unfortunately, as explained in the last report, these in the main comprised the weaker types of candidates; only 33 per cent. of them succeeded in obtaining certificates, whereas of those who sat for the conjoint examination 57 per cent. were successful.

The total number of certificates granted was 2,411, as against 2,310 in the preceding year. Partial passes were obtained by 724 candidates. Of the subjects not prescribed for University Entrance, book-keeping still maintains its lead in popularity, with 118 candidates; physiology and hygiene (31), economics (27), needlework (25), showed increases, while technical drawing (16) maintained its demand, and shorthand and typing (31) fell away slightly. There is still a limited number of candidates for technical electricity (10), applied mechanics (9) and housecraft (9). Again this year there were no candidates for either biology or heat engines.

It was pointed out in last year's report that general recognition of the value of the school certificate by business men and employers has not yet been obtained, and that probably there will be no general recognition unless either the standard for entrance to the University is raised until it is approximately one year in advance of the present standard, or until no test at all is required for entrance to the University. The Public Service Commissioners have, however, just prior to the publication of this report, announced that a school certificate will be accepted for purposes of entry into the Public Service, and that applicants with this qualification will be given precedence over applicants who have no qualification beyond a pass in the Public Service Entrance Examination.

Higher-leaving certificates to the number of 746 were awarded to pupils from departmental secondary and combined schools, with an additional 158 to pupils from endowed and registered private secondary schools. This represents a slight increase over corresponding numbers (688 and 132 respectively) for the year 1935, but the demand is still much less than in the years when the higher leaving certificate entitled the holder to a University bursary. Some schools and candidates lost interest in the certificate when it no longer had the same material value, and there was not the same inducement to pupils to complete their school-year if a suitable position offered in the third term. A large increase in the demand is confidently anticipated in 1937.

THE BURSARY SYSTEM.

During the year 1936 there was no improvement in regard to University bursaries. The number sitting for the examination on a reduced total of marks in order to qualify for a bursary only was 69 (56 in 1935), while the number sitting in order to qualify for Bursary and Entrance Scholarship both was 207 (232 in 1935). Of the total number who sat, 177 qualified for bursaries. As has been pointed out for some years, the reduction in the value of the bursary to half University tuition fees, with a maximum of £10 annually, rendered it of little value to students outside the University town, whose total annual expenditure, if they entered upon a University course, must largely exceed that amount.

I feel bound to refer to the re-establishment just prior to the writing of this report of the University National Bursary System on a more generous basis even than in 1931 and previous years. The statistics relating to this will be fully dealt with in next year's report, but reference may be made