

(5) Two additional occupation centres for children of low mentality have been established. In 1946 a hostel will be opened for the pupils of the Dunedin Occupation Centre.

(6) Hospital classes have increased from 11 to 20, and 6 additional health camps have been established.

(7) Four visiting teachers have been appointed to the staff of the Correspondence School for the special duty of visiting crippled and handicapped pupils in their homes, to help them with their school work, and generally to make them feel they belong to a school that is not a mere pencil-and-paper institution. The Correspondence School provides for the tuition of some 400 children, mainly cripples, who are unable to attend any other school.

(8) Several adjustment classes have been established on an experimental basis to assist children of normal intelligence who suffer from special weaknesses in certain subjects, such as reading, spelling, or arithmetic.

The Government looks forward to a further expansion of the facilities for handicapped children, and particularly to a more complete and systematic training for teachers in this field.

### Post-primary Schools

As in the case of the primary schools, I do not anticipate any marked changes in policy in the post-primary schools during the next five years. The schools must be given time to adjust themselves to the changes in the post-primary curriculum that have been effected over the past two or three years. As was explained in my predecessor's report for 1939, the original structure of the New Zealand secondary-school system (as, indeed, of practically all systems of the world) was based on the assumption that secondary education would be given to only a small proportion of the population—the well-to-do would buy places in the secondary schools, and the specially brilliant would win them through a limited number of scholarships. The education given to these selected groups was mainly verbal and academic in nature.

Although the rigour of this highly selective system was gradually relaxed from the beginning of the century, this Government, in the words of my predecessor in office, "was the first to recognize explicitly that continued education is no longer a special privilege for the well-to-do or the academically able, but a right to be claimed by all who want it to the fullest extent the State can provide. . . . Schools that are to cater for the whole population must offer courses that are as rich and varied as the need and abilities of the children who enter them." The changes introduced into the post-primary schools over the past ten years have been based on this principle:—

(1) The abolition of the Proficiency Examination removed the last barrier to a full post-primary education for every child desiring it. In 1935, 58 per cent. of the children leaving primary and intermediate schools and departments entered a post-primary school; in 1945 the corresponding figure was 82 per cent. Since the abilities of the children in academic subjects vary widely, the secondary schools have been compelled, as never before, to diversify their curricula and provide courses for the practical as well as for the academic types of children.

(2) The work of the secondary schools had for many years been dominated by the demands of the University Entrance Examination. Although only a small proportion of secondary-school pupils ever went on to University studies, a large number were virtually compelled to take subjects unsuited to their talents or their future careers, because the University Entrance Examination had become the recognized qualification demanded by employers. The University decided as from 1944 to raise the standard of University Entrance and to adopt a system of accrediting for the better pupils from approved schools. The Government has met the additional costs incurred by the University as a result of the change. The introduction of accrediting and of a higher standard for University Entrance largely restricted this qualification to pupils seriously intending to undertake University studies. So the School Certificate Examination, which allows a wide range of subjects, practical as well as academic, has become the new