

During recent years teachers and Inspectors have, more and more, met together to discuss the revision of the subject syllabuses and new teaching procedures. These discussions are most valuable for they arouse professional interest, deepen understanding, and strengthen co-operation and team work. In order to assist the development of discussion and group thinking, plans have been made to conduct a residential staff school in which small groups of headmasters and Inspectors will meet to discuss important aspects of educational thought and to experiment with discussion procedures. Within the primary service, the influence of the headmaster is crucial, and the progress of the revised curriculum and the introduction of modern learning methods depend largely on his understanding and leadership. Furthermore, for changes in the curriculum and in method to reach their fullest fruition, care must be taken to ensure that what might be termed the pedagogical security of the teacher is respected. This security cannot, of course, be divorced from professional responsibility, but to a great extent depends upon the calibre of the headmasters and their power to develop healthy, happy, human relationships within the school.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS

Two years ago the training colleges were asked to make suggestions for the revision of their subject syllabuses. After deliberations lasting more than a year, the staffs of the colleges presented individually revised prescriptions for each subject, and at this stage a conference of the principals of the colleges was called. The conference discussed policy relating to certification, curriculum, and staffing, and it set up collating committees to draw up from the various recommendations syllabuses which would be operative until the Consultative Committee on Teacher Training should make its report, probably towards the end of 1950. In the meantime the provisional arrangements approved by the Acting-Director will enable the colleges to keep in line with modern developments. The Consultative Committee began its deliberations in December, 1948, and plans to make investigations in the Auckland, Ardmore, and Wellington Training Colleges early in 1949. In order to train additional teachers to meet the increase in school population a fifth Teachers' Training College was opened at Ardmore in March, 1948. A co-educational, residential training college, this was a new departure in teacher-training for the Dominion, and new problems raised by housing and domestic matters, equipment, staffing, transport, and accommodation all called for intense effort. The major burden of these problems fell on the Auckland Education Board and its officers, who are to be congratulated on the expeditious way in which all the difficulties were overcome. The Auckland University College Council assisted materially in the success of the first year by permitting instruction at Stage I in education, English, and history at Ardmore itself.

SUPPLY OF TEACHERS

Four factors have an important bearing on the supply of teachers—viz., the trend of the school population, the size of classes, the length of service of those entering the profession in primary schools, and the special problems connected with the staffing of country schools. In the ten years 1936 to 1945 the total primary-school population was stationary (approximately 220,000). With the rising birth-rate from 1940 onwards, the total increased to 240,000 in 1948; as children born after 1940 go through our primary schools the rolls will show accumulated increases, and are expected to be near 300,000 in 1952–53. The total of approximately 7,000 class-teachers, which was sufficient to keep all schools adequately staffed in 1945, will have to be increased to 9,600 by 1952–53. A further increase in the numbers of primary-school teachers will be necessary before the full staffing provided by the Education (Salaries and Staffing) Regulations 1948 can be put into operation. Moreover, provision has to be made for maintaining and expanding the specialist services which have been built up in recent years. Between