

experience. This steady increase in the number of trained entrants is very gratifying, but it is to be regretted that a considerable number of prospective secondary teachers do not consider it worth their while to spend even one year at a training college. The arrangement referred to in last year's report, whereby a few selected training-college students are given an opportunity for observational and practice work in the larger secondary schools, continues to operate quite satisfactorily at Wellington College and also at the Christchurch Girls' and the Otago Boys' High Schools.

A somewhat disquieting feature in connection with the academic equipment of secondary-school teachers is the apparently unabated desire of students to obtain honours in such comparatively unsuitable subjects as economics, political science, and philosophy. Too many teachers have also graduated with honours in history in recent years. Students who propose to take up work in secondary schools would do well to realize that in the vast majority of cases A grade positions will naturally fall to those teachers who possess good qualifications in languages, in science, or in mathematics. The attention of young or prospective teachers is also drawn to another point. In the course of the next few years it is highly probable that the competition for junior positions will become much keener than it is at present. It is almost certain also that art, music, commercial subjects, and handwork, which have hitherto been regarded as "extras," and placed in the hands of part-time instructors, will form a much more important part of the curricula in our secondary schools; it is fairly obvious, therefore, that the applicant with special qualifications in one or other of these subjects in addition to his ordinary academic preparation will the more readily secure what appointments are offering. It is abundantly evident that the employment of part-time teachers has already reached its limits in many cases, and no extension of it can reasonably be expected. Where facilities are available for acquiring experience or training in one of the above-named special subjects young teachers are therefore advised to make full use of them.

So far as the curricula of secondary schools are concerned, it is obvious that Principals and staffs are not altogether satisfied with the present position. The more progressive schools would, if it were reasonably practicable, willingly enlarge their programmes by including adequate instruction in subjects more adapted to the non-academic type of pupil. Woodwork and metalwork, and even drawing, have hitherto received but scant attention in our schools; facilities and equipment have not, as a rule, been available in the past, nor has it been easy to secure adequately qualified part-time teachers of these subjects. Where junior high schools have been attached to senior schools the position has happily been relieved by the provision of workshops and full-time and special teachers in art, domestic crafts, metalwork, and woodwork. At least one other boys' school has made an independent move and has planned to include both metalwork and woodwork in its programme for 1927.

Increasing attention is being paid, especially in the girls' schools, to speech-training and elocution. English phonetics have in the past been left too often to the third year of the secondary-school course, and then been treated merely as a subject for examination. At the request of the Inspector an attempt at scientific sound-study is now being made in most schools at the beginning of the course, and good results should follow. In this connection it is gratifying to note the marked interest displayed by teachers in the "vacation school" on phonetics and sound-study held in May of last year. The "school" was distinctly successful, and great credit is due to Miss. D. M. Stewart, Mademoiselle Favry, and all others responsible for its conduct and organization.

The study of civics has shown some improvement in method, and the subject is now being treated on lines that are a little more practical. Up-to-date information on the part of the teacher is still sometimes lacking, a defect which a study of the daily paper and such publications as *Current History*, the *Round Table*, the local Year-book, and the leaflet on current events, would easily remove. Regarding the wider study of history as a whole, the results in most of our secondary schools are as yet somewhat disappointing. Too much attention is often paid to fact and incident—the mere framework—and too little to the picturesque and human element. Teachers are inclined to think too much of the neat arrangement of information for reproduction in examinations, and not enough of rousing intelligent curiosity and thoughtful judgment in their pupils. The Department has placed history among the compulsory subjects for its examinations with a view to ensuring time for a fruitful study of the subject and the creation of a lasting interest in it. It would be a matter for regret if mistaken aims in teaching were to produce a contrary effect—the stifling and the deadening of interest.

References to the cramping effect of the Matriculation Examination upon secondary-school curricula have been repeated so often as to become wearisome. It is obviously unfair to lay the whole blame upon the University, which is undoubtedly entitled to demand a reasonable standard of education and attainment from entrants upon degree courses. It is the abuse of the Matriculation Examination by pupils and their parents, by the business community, and even by the schools themselves, and not its legitimate use as a means of entrance to University courses, that has led to its present unduly prominent position and its consequent execration by many educationists. The establishment of an alternative school leaving-certificate would no doubt offer some relief from the present unsatisfactory position, and in this connection assistance and guidance are confidently expected from the operations of the new University Entrance Board shortly to be established under the University Act, 1926. The duties of the Board, to quote the Act, "Shall be to consider the curricula and courses of study at secondary and technical high schools in relation to the educational and other requirements for matriculation at any constituent college; it may also consider such other matters in relation to secondary education as may from time to time be referred to it by the Minister of Education or by the University Council."

It is still somewhat too early to dogmatize on the ultimate possibilities of the junior school. It is abundantly clear, however, that the better classification made possible by the new system will enable the brighter pupils to make considerable progress in their secondary subjects without detriment to the work usually covered in Standards V and VI of the primary schools. Except in isolated cases,