

is situated, but there is gradually developing a practice of schools releasing some of their staff to attend special courses—*e.g.*, in art and crafts—arranged at the college for their particular benefit.

College lecturers are more and more in demand for brief refresher courses arranged privately by teachers in districts remote from the college. The Department is pleased to expedite such arrangements whenever this can be done without embarrassment to the college itself. But much development along such lines would not be possible without some duplication of college staffs.

THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

The Correspondence School continues to give excellent service to all those to whom the ordinary primary or post-primary school is not available. The roll at the end of the year comprised 1,772 primary and 891 post-primary pupils. At the end of the year sixteen pupils passed either the University Entrance Examination or the School Certificate Examination, or both, while two obtained partial passes. At the same time twenty-five either passed the Training College Entrance Examination or secured a partial pass. One ex-pupil whose secondary education had been entirely with the Correspondence School obtained her M.A. degree with honours, while another who owes her whole primary education to the school has just obtained her M.B., Ch.B. degrees.

Innovations during the year included the introduction of light woodwork, shorthand, and typewriting into the curriculum, and the establishment, in conjunction with the Post Office, of a schools savings-bank. Arrangements were also made for the school to broadcast to its pupils for half an hour weekly. It has also been decided to hold in suitable centres a special course for Correspondence School pupils, when particular attention will be paid to physical training, music, speech, and other cultural and social activities that cannot well be promoted through the medium of correspondence. The first of such courses will be held in the premises of the Gisborne High School during the May vacation. Arrangements will also be made to send a member of the staff to visit the homes of the pupils to advise the parents of the best conditions under which the pupils can work and to discuss any problems which may have arisen, especially those of supervision of lessons, about which some parents have been unnecessarily concerned.

SPECIAL CLASSES.

The thirty-four Special Classes for retarded children are doing fine work for those pupils who cannot receive in a normal class the amount of individual attention necessary to their progress. It is to be regretted that there are still some parents who will not take advantage of these classes, thus depriving their children of almost the only opportunity they have of becoming in some degree self-supporting and self-respecting citizens. The Institute for the Care of Backward Children (Auckland) has done much to increase the happiness, self-respect, and self-reliance of a number of children who are not able to receive the necessary attention even in special classes. A tribute must be paid to the Committee of this Institute for its excellent organization. Another organization, the After-care Association, is developing along similar lines in Wellington and doing similarly appreciated work, and only requires more funds and a more suitable environment to enable its enthusiastic committee to extend its activities and enrich the curriculum.

There has arisen of late a demand for some provision for the education of the mentally retarded children scattered here and there throughout our rural areas, but too few in any one locality to make possible the establishment of a special class. Some of these are fit subjects for special classes; others are below that level, yet still capable of being trained to live a happier and more social life. It would appear, therefore, that two institutions might be necessary each with boarding-accommodation, and both in the North Island, for, whereas in the South Island Otekaike and Richmond cater for boys and girls respectively of the retarded but fairly educable type, and Templeton and Stoke for the less educable, there are no corresponding homes in the North Island, from which the demand principally comes.

Another problem which in some countries is now beginning to receive expert attention is that of the child who, though of normal mental capacity, cannot make the progress usually associated with such ability. Some of these children present behaviour problems, and are perhaps anti-social in character; others quite fail to become proficient in one or more subjects. To the parent and the class-teacher such children often present an insoluble problem, since neither the parent, the teacher, nor the child itself knows the source of the trouble. It is because of this that child-guidance clinics are now being established to which these non-normal children may be taken for diagnosis. Appropriate treatment may be given at the clinic, or by the child's teacher or parent acting on the advice of the clinic. Tentative experiments in this matter have already been made by some of the psychological laboratories of our University Colleges, but the staffs and equipment available are not sufficient to cope adequately with the problem. It is intended to investigate the matter next year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

During the year a conference was held to discuss the matter of physical education in schools, and valuable recommendations were made concerning text-books, instructors, school furniture, physical-welfare camps, and other matters affecting the general health of the children. The recommendations of the conference are under consideration. Meanwhile schools are proceeding as before. Every student in the Training Colleges receives a sound training in the present system. The principal obstacle to the success desired is the lack of instructors, whose duty it would be to visit the schools, see the work in progress, advise the teachers, and hold refresher courses periodically. In few aspects of education is expert advice so necessary.