

instruction was to be set aside, whereas that of the sergeants sent by the Defence Force is admirable; cadet corps in uniform have been in existence for years; also, pole and indian-club and Swedish drill will still be retained for the instruction of girls and junior classes. All that is wanted is the extended formation of companies on uniform lines under competent supervision; and this can soon be accomplished. Other adjuncts, which appeared as a part of the original proposal, will follow. We hope the Defence Department will continue the valuable assistance hitherto so much appreciated.

The issue of diplomas, for the first time this year, to teachers who pass a satisfactory examination in ability to teach singing, as well as in the theory of music, is calculated to have a good effect on the teaching of singing in schools, and to form a useful stimulant in maintaining interest in the work of the instruction classes for teachers. Mr. Parker's work continues to be in greater evidence in the improved instruction in the schools, both in the quality of the singing and in the increased number of class-teachers capable of giving instruction. In many schools newer and brighter songs have been introduced, and most of the larger schools are provided with a piano, generally purchased by the School Committees with funds raised by subscriptions or by entertainments.

Sewing is making satisfactory progress, and nearly all schools now teach the making of small dresses and work in wool in addition to plain sewing. The plan is also adopted of giving a moderate amount of varied work in small garments instead of the old-time plan of much work in large garments. The sewing of any small school or of any particular class in a large school depends on the skill of the teacher. Of course this remark may be made with some truth in regard to any subject, for much of all learning is imitation; but it holds with greater force in regard to sewing.

There are two important columns in the appendix to this report, one under the heading "Order and Discipline," and the other "Manners"; and in these columns we have differentiated the schools as fairly as we can at present, for we recognise both the desirability of doing this more thoroughly and the difficulty of making a just distinction. Now that, with the additional assistance, more time can be given to inspection, when there is more opportunity of observing these features of a school, we hope to make a closer discrimination. It is sometimes said, often on slender evidence, and as a reproach to our national system of education, that, while good instruction is imparted in reading and writing and generally in the attainment of knowledge, the teaching of manners is sadly neglected. Speaking generally, we think teachers deserve the sympathy of the public for the pains taken to correct the faults of their pupils; but in large mixed schools almost insuperable difficulties sometimes arise in bringing under proper control children who are either altogether neglected at home or subjected to counteracting influences.

In these days, when consumption and all forms of tuberculosis are known to be transmitted by matter given off from others, it becomes imperative upon all connected with the management of schools to safeguard as far as possible the health of children at school, for where many congregate the danger is great. Therefore the duties of teachers in this respect are onerous; and almost daily vigilance should be exercised. In the buildings erected of late years due attention has been paid to sanitation; but, for all that, much supervision is needed. On the whole we are persuaded that due attention is paid to cleanliness and the abatement of nuisances as commonly understood, and yet much more could be done in what are ordinarily considered matters of less importance—such as by burning all waste-paper, rubbish and litter, instead of throwing it into pits and waste places, in the use of wet rags for cleaning slates, in the substitution of paper as much as possible for slates, in the suppression of expectoration in public places, and in the airing of rooms before and after school. Most important of all are the frequent use of dry earth in offices and the periodic disinfection of rooms after school.

Reporting on the several classes of schools, we note that all the eleven largest, averaging 630 children, in Class A, are in a very satisfactory condition. Except in one there were no weak classes, and the best classes in all of them did very commendable work.

We notice also that all the twenty-one schools, averaging 156 pupils, in Class B were under experienced teachers, that during the past year no change has occurred in the head-ship of any of them, that the results everywhere gave satisfaction, and that commendable work was done in all but one or two below average merit.

In Class C are twenty-nine schools, with an average of sixty-three pupils, some taught by three teachers, but most of them by two. In two or three of them some of the work was moderate; in the rest good work was done, and we commended ten of them. In these schools there had been no change during the year in the head-teachers.

But when we examine the results of the fifty-five schools in Class D, averaging twenty-eight pupils, and under one teacher, we find many changes have occurred in the management—some are new schools, and others are under the control of teachers who have much to learn. Although many of them are in good hands, the standards were passed by only 82 per cent. of those examined, showing that the results in the weaker schools must be low. There is danger of these smaller schools falling off in efficiency, and the best remedy for this is in the most careful and discriminate selection of teachers to fill vacancies.

In Class E are thirteen aided schools, all but two of which are of recent institution. Some of them are under unqualified teachers; others are working under more satisfactory conditions. One of them, Waingawa, has been established over twenty years, during the whole of which time it has produced some of the best freehand drawing in the district.

In the infant schools and in the infant departments of the larger schools we notice considerable extension of the kindergarden system, especially in musical drill. At Mount Cook and Thorndon funds are annually collected for the purchase of new material, which is most useful in supplying fresh and attractive occupations. Basket-work on industrial lines is the newest and best occupation introduced; but the use of small ball-frames by each child for learning to count,