

account that in our superannuation systems receives no weight—namely, that with the same length of service a teacher retiring, say, at 65 receives a higher pension than one retiring at 60. This is actuarially sound, as the older teacher has presumably a shorter time to live. I am not quite sure, however, whether on grounds of public policy ours is not the better plan; it is not desirable to give extra inducements to worn-out teachers to remain in the service.

NOTES ON FOUR ENGLISH SCHOOLS.

THE "MICHAEL FARADAY" LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, WALWORTH, S.E.

This school is an excellent example of the practical carrying out of the new ideas in education. The headmaster is Mr. Marshall Jackman, whose name is probably known to all in New Zealand who read English educational journals. Comparing its work, class for class and age for age, with that in our New Zealand town schools of similar size, I came to the conclusion that it reached a very high standard. The programme in each subject is well thought out, and thoroughness is a marked characteristic of its execution. Great attention is paid to English, oral and written, emphasis being laid on comprehension and on clear and accurate expression of thought. In arithmetic no paper or slate work is done until after Class 3 (the old Standard IV) is passed; the work is all done either mentally or on the black-board. The questions are all very practical, and the numbers used are small. I was allowed to test the work in Standard IV, and found it very good. The programme of the instruction in this subject is printed in the Appendix.

Science is taught on the heuristic method, the boys working in pairs. They are encouraged to extend their knowledge by visiting museums and factories, and by consulting books in the excellent school library. The programme is a comparatively simple one, as will appear from the scheme of Practical Science for Standard VII, which is given under the head of the "Teaching of Science" in the Appendix.

One of the features of the school is the method adopted in the highest class of the boys' school. Only a few of the lessons are what may be called formal—namely, a few lessons in arithmetic (including simple book-keeping) and in English; science, as in the programme already referred to, and manual work. All this occupies not more than a third of the school hours. For the rest of the time each boy takes up a special subject chosen by himself, and finds out all he can about it by personal investigation and by use of the class library, which contains many good books of reference. One boy was taking up the subject of the London County Council electric tramway system. He received through his master permission to visit a power-house and a car-factory, to examine the wheels and other fittings, the brakes, and so forth; he read all that he could on the subject, and made notes in a special note-book of all that he saw or learnt from books, or in answer to questions; he made drawings and diagrams to illustrate his notes, and connected the knowledge he gained of electric power with the science lessons. He might, the master said, make, in the manual workshop, models of parts of tramcars, &c., and might even make a small complete working model of an electric tramway. He had to study the cost of manufacture, of installation, and of working. Finally, he had to write a clear, consecutive account of the whole matter. Other boys would take up historical, geographical, literary, commercial, or other technical subjects. The master of the class, which at the beginning of the year contained 27 boys, exercised a right of veto over the subjects chosen, sometimes suggesting questions for investigation. He guided the inquiries of the various pupils, and looked over and corrected their notes and essays. The knowledge gained became the common property of the whole class. It is contended that the boys leave school with the desire and the power to find out things for themselves, and, as they often choose subjects connected with their future trades, really prepare themselves for intelligent work therein. The father of the boy I have referred to was in the service of the London County Council tramways, and the boy's ambition was to be a motorman or to be engaged in the power-house.

Altogether, the method of work adopted in the class was very suggestive. It will be observed that a good reference library for the class is an essential of success; moreover, the class should not be too large. The method is worthy of consideration in our classes Standard VI and Standard VII, especially the latter, even in the country. It has one great advantage that the pupil is kept occupied about some useful work in which he is really interested, and if he has to leave school before the close of the year, leaves it with some definite tasks completed.