

course arrangements have been made to differentiate between the work of the boys and that of the girls. The latter will receive instruction and practice in cookery, domestic economy, hygiene, and dressmaking. In this way we hope to give the girls a definite, though necessarily limited, course of training in household management. We look upon the scheme introduced by the Department in 1909 as the most important advance in education that has taken place for years; but we recognize that it is only the beginning of a movement that must lead to the establishment of fully equipped agricultural colleges for boys and hostels for complete domestic training for girls. The scheme has been enthusiastically supported by committees and local bodies, and, though the initiation of the scheme has been costly, the Department has been most generous in its grants for buildings.

By the introduction of this scheme the larger schools of the district will also benefit, for it will enable the Board to extend the courses in manual and domestic work further than has been possible hitherto.

With the aims of manual and technical training we are in hearty sympathy, and, while thoroughly recognizing that we are working under conditions that are far from ideal, we believe that, aided by local interest and enthusiastic teachers, we have reasonable expectations of success from the efforts to secure in our district high schools such courses of study as will give due weight to the disciplinary and utilitarian phases of education.

The following figures show the grouping of the schools according to their efficiency: Excellent, very good, or good, 69 per cent.; satisfactory, 27 per cent.; fair, 3 per cent.; inferior, 1 per cent. The first shows a decline of 1 per cent., the second an increase of 6 per cent., the third a decrease of 4 per cent., and the last a decrease of 2 per cent. as compared with the classification of last year. With three exceptions, the schools that fall below "satisfactory" were in charge of uncertificated teachers. From this it will be seen that many of our untrained teachers are doing satisfactory work, and, as many of them have been relieved to a considerable extent from the strain of preparation for certificate examinations, we look for material improvement in the schools now grouped as "satisfactory." We appeal confidently to our teachers to raise the number of "good" schools to 75 per cent.

In most schools satisfactory schemes of work are prepared, but at our unannounced visits we have too often found that they had not been compiled at the beginning of the year, and that in some cases they did not show the work for the whole year. In future we shall expect to find all schemes fully compiled within a fortnight of the resumption of the year's work. The attention of teachers has frequently to be directed to the fact that the amount of work covered in each term is not entered in the term examination-book. The omission of this is a great inconvenience to an incoming teacher. Amongst young teachers the practice of presenting the scheme of the model school is too common, and betokens an inability to modify it to meet the local requirements. Like a modern school time-table, a model school scheme of work has its limits of practical application, a fact that many young teachers fail to perceive.

At the annual examinations 79 per cent. of the pupils presented gained the proficiency certificate, an advance of 9 per cent. on the results of the previous year. This improvement we attribute to—(1) Continued vigilance on the part of head teachers in promoting pupils, (2) the influence of the supplementary readers and libraries, (3) the general knowledge furnished by the *School Journal*, (4) increased accuracy in the mechanical processes in arithmetic and the better memorizing of tables.

There is no doubt that the training in the various branches of handwork, especially in woodwork and cookery, is now making itself felt in this connection also. We are of opinion that where a full course of laboratory or workshop practice is carried out Inspectors should be permitted to use the work done to compensate for weakness in the pass subjects for the proficiency certificate. A precedent for this has already been set in the scholarship regulations, and we hope the Department will see its way to apply the principle in Standard VI.

Generally the classification of the pupils by the head teachers has been satisfactorily carried out. In a few instances where teachers have been unable to withstand the pressure of parents persistent for the advancement of their children the Inspectors have again taken the responsibility off the teacher and reclassified the pupils. These cases were all in rural schools where the peace and comfort of the teacher largely depended on his action in this matter. The most flagrant cases of overclassification that have come under our notice have been in schools from which teachers have removed to other situations, and give rise to the question as to whether all changes in position should not be made at the beginning of the school year. A teacher would then have to reap the reward of his own indiscretion.

ENGLISH.—Of the various branches under this head, reading calls for some comment. In most of the schools it is a strong subject, and especially in those schools where the supplementary readers and library books are freely used. In the upper classes of the schools above Grade 3 it is for the most part good. In these schools the value of silent reading as a means of getting at the thought-content is being more fully realized, although the power of thought-expression through continuous oral statement is not always as good as we could wish. This may be due in part to the fact that in the junior classes teachers have not realized the value of training their pupils in oral story work. No doubt the mechanical difficulties in the early stages of reading are very great, but there is ample scope for giving pupils an opportunity of expressing in simple child language their thoughts on the matter of the lesson. This practice continued through the school course up to Standard III would fix the habit and would be a valuable aid to composition. Similar practice can and ought to be given in nature-study, geography, handwork, drawing, and arithmetic. If it were systematically insisted on, the teacher would find less need for "chalk and talk" on her part, and a keener interest in all branches of work would be manifested by the pupils. Side by side with this, special attention should be given to phonics, a branch in which many of our