

for instruction in subjects that would help them for the certificate examinations. Teachers' week-end training classes were held at Oamaru and Dunedin, and were made good use of by the unclassified teachers within reach of these centres. At Oamaru instruction was given in first aid and ambulance, hygiene, and methods of teaching. In Dunedin week-end classes were carried on in first aid and ambulance, hygiene, vocal music, woodwork, practical home science, needlework, practical agriculture, botany, physiology, and various branches of drawing. In addition to these week-end courses, arrangements were made for a summer course for those intending to sit for the January examinations. This course was not largely attended, but those who did attend were earnest and eager students. The course consisted of practical agriculture, botany, first aid and ambulance, physiology, English, geography, mathematics, arithmetic, methods of teaching, vocal music, and drawing. In a few isolated cases recognized courses of instruction in practical science were given by local teachers to candidates for the D examination. A close contact with the students who attend these varied courses conveys the impression that a satisfactory proportion of our unclassified teachers are determined to improve their status, and that it is not so much the lack of desire as the inability, owing to inadequate initial equipment, to profit by these courses, that prevents many from taking fuller advantage of them. We would again express our indebtedness to the various instructors who cheerfully offered their services in connection with these classes, and helped very materially the cause of education in the outlying parts of the district. The first-aid and ambulance courses were conducted by Dr. Church and Dr. J. Fitzgerald in Dunedin, and by Dr. Douglas in Oamaru, and we wish to place on record our appreciation of the splendid work done by these gentlemen in this connection, and of the valuable aid rendered by the ladies and gentlemen who acted as demonstrators for their classes.

*Medical Inspection.*—Dr. Ada G. Paterson continued the work of medical inspection during the year, and her reports have been placed before the Board as they have come to hand from the Department. One gathers from these reports that the teeth of the young in this district are in a very bad condition. It is evident that parents either do not or cannot provide the professional assistance needed to remedy this very serious state of affairs, and we believe that the time is not far distant when the State will find it necessary to take radical steps to safeguard the interests of the young in this connection.

*School Buildings.*—The condition of the buildings as a whole is good and the interest of the Committees is well maintained. We have seldom had to comment adversely on the care or cleanliness of the school premises, but in a few cases the condition of the fences was not in keeping with the rest of the property. During the year we have had occasion to direct the attention of a few teachers to the practice adopted by pupils of taking short cuts through or over fences, and on one occasion we noted wanton destruction of well-grown trees by pupils during recess. There is absolutely no excuse for such action, and teachers who permit or overlook it are deserving of the severest censure.

The practice of tree and shrub planting in the school-grounds is slowly but steadily spreading. In several schools considerable advance has been made, and we hope during the incoming season to see it carried much further. In the late autumn the Board will have about four thousand young trees and shrubs ready for distribution to district high schools.

*District High Schools.*—[See E.-6, Report on Secondary Education.]

*Manual Training.*—[See E.-5, Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.]

*Schemes of Work.*—As a rule, the programmes of work have been carefully prepared, and provided ample matter for a year's work. With some of the syllabuses in history presented in the larger schools we were disappointed, owing to the small amount of work covered, and we shall in future look for marked improvement in this connection. During the latter part of the year a fresh impulse was given to the teaching of geography and history. Teachers took the opportunity offered by the great national crisis to instil into the minds of their pupils a knowledge of current events and important positions of war operations. The wave of patriotism sweeping over the country had aroused in our pupils an intense interest in the war, so that this branch of the work required only direction. Many teachers, however, stopped at that point, and missed a fine opportunity of linking the present epoch-making period to the past history of our nation. Many connecting links between the present war and those of earlier times—e.g., causes, leaders, arms, allies, battlefields, &c.—suggest themselves to the well-informed and thoughtful teacher. By judicious use of such links the past can be made to live again, and the history of our people be made a thing of real, living interest to the rising generation. It will be a thousand pities if teachers do not use to the full the opportunities thus offered to arouse in their pupils a keen desire to make themselves familiar with our past history.

*Classification of Pupils.*—On the whole, the right to classify pupils has been exercised with discretion by our teachers. We note in the larger schools a desire to speed up the work of the P classes, and we suggest that in the same group of schools more might be done in this respect with the brighter pupils of S5. The work of S6 does not differ so widely from that of S5 as to prevent teachers from giving some of the brighter pupils of the latter class an earlier opportunity of entering on the work of S6. In these schools the head teacher is, as a rule, freed from the responsibility of taking a class, and a part of his time might be usefully devoted to helping along such pupils without materially interfering with the work of the class as a whole. With regard to efficiency we group the schools of the district as follows: Excellent or very good, 27 per cent.; good, 40 per cent.; satisfactory, 26 per cent.; fair to inferior, 7 per cent. From this it will be seen that in two-thirds of our schools the pupils are receiving a good foundation for future training.

*Proficiency Certificates.*—During the year pupils were brought to centres for examination in Oamaru, Balclutha, and Lawrence in November and December, and, as far as possible, the pupils from the city and suburban schools were examined in the same months at their own schools. In most of the country schools teachers took advantage of Regulation 18, and presented their S6 pupils for examination at the time of the annual inspection during the months of September, October, and the