

vacation, for the treatment of special cases. On several occasions I saw this class in operation, and the children appeared to benefit greatly by the course. The parents have co-operated heartily with the instructor. The preservation of individual records would tend still further to enhance the advantages of the innovation. In schools generally the requirements under this heading are carefully attended to. A specially fine class was noted at Napier Main School, where the boys took off coat and vest during the drill; there was a very pleasing sense of thoroughness and definite objective in their exercises, and every pupil appeared in excellent physical form. The plan of providing a hot drink for children who bring their lunch has extended, with beneficial effects, to a number of schools other than those mentioned in our last annual report. The children readily fall into the way of managing the whole matter for themselves with a minimum of supervision. It is interesting to see the elder girls mothering the young ones, and surely it is an advantage to have this trait of home life imported into our schools.

*Examination of Standard VI.*—Most of the candidates were tested by careful assessment of progress during our annual visits in the latter half of the year. At central examinations held during November and December in Gisborne, Napier, Hastings, and Dannevirke those who had been noted as specially weak in English and arithmetic were given an opportunity to show what improvement they had made; there were also special tests for similar pupils in country schools. The results were eminently satisfactory. The system made, however, excessive demand on the Inspectorate, an addition to the staff in this district being urgently required. In public schools 828 pupils were examined in Standard VI. There were eighty-one in convent schools and forty-nine from private and high schools. The total number examined was 958, which number may be compared with 901 for the previous year:—

|                                                  | Proficiency. | Competency. |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Board schools .. .. .                            | 539          | 162         |
| Convent schools .. .. .                          | 49           | 14          |
| Private schools .. .. .                          | 9            | 0           |
| High schools, including Napier Technical .. .. . | 20           | 9           |
| Totals .. .. .                                   | 617          | 185         |

The quality of instruction in the primary departments of high schools improved greatly. As in past years, it is proposed to reconsider, at the end of March, the claims of some of those who failed or who gained only competency. When all of these cases are dealt with it is estimated that about 72 per cent. of the candidates will have gained the proficiency certificate.

*Scholarships.*—The new method of assessment brought to this district twelve Junior National Scholarships and three Senior National Scholarships. No sole-teacher school was able to gain a Junior National Scholarship. For sole-teacher schools the experience of past years suggests that the tests were already sufficiently stringent. Six of the junior scholarships went to candidates from high schools or district high schools. Only one two-teacher school—Petane—was represented. These scholarships do not yet reach the right people—the country children who have not otherwise the benefits of secondary education readily available. A Sixth Standard proficiency certificate in most cases opens the door of the high school to the town child; yet ten of the twelve scholarships went to children within easy reach of schools giving secondary instruction. The remaining two went to candidates in the Wairoa district.

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

*The Teachers.*—For another year the teachers' classification and promotion scheme has worked effectively. It is distinctive among the schemes in New Zealand in that no special marks are allowed for academic status, it being considered that a degree which does not produce higher efficiency is not worth consideration. As a rule, however, and with rare exceptions, those who have laboured for a degree or a partial degree both rise more rapidly, and are relatively more numerous at the head of the list, showing that the time spent on degree-work has returned value in increased efficiency. To give marks for a degree that does not heighten a teacher's efficiency appears a gratuitous recognition of a token. The war makes increasing demands on our ablest young male teachers. Their places are kept open for them, being occupied by teachers in temporary employ. During the coming year it will probably be necessary to summon the ablest among our female teachers to take charge of schools of higher grade than have hitherto been allotted to them. Saturday classes, correspondence classes, and a central summer school for country teachers have been held—the last-named in order to overtake the certificate requirements in agriculture, dairy science, and hygiene. The summer school lasted four weeks, and a thoroughly sound and comprehensive course was covered by Messrs. Loten, Morris, and Garry. There is every indication that the teachers take full advantage of the facilities provided. By latest returns it appears that a larger number than usual have gained a certificate. In connection with war relief the teachers have rallied nobly and have led or joined in movements, both within and without the schools, whereby in almost every locality large sums of money and extensive additions to equipment have been produced. By this means also they have given the children a valuable training in civic and social duty, and cultivated an enlightened sympathy whose bright light shines keenly across the shadows of war and represents something retrieved from the debris of our civilization.

*Mr. Hill.*—In December Mr. Hill closed his active connection with the Inspectorate of Hawke's Bay District. This ends thirty-seven years of strenuous service. He has been at all times a man of a vigorous, stimulating, and impressive personality.

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