

In the primary classes of the private schools inspected by us during the year the number of pupils on the roll at the time of the annual examination was 1,709, of whom 1,593 were present at the examination. In these schools 102 pupils gained certificates of proficiency, and nine certificates of competency (S6). The number enrolled in S7 at these schools was 183. In addition to the Roman Catholic schools inspected by us in previous years, six other private schools in this district were visited in response to applications for registration from the managers of these institutions. Five of these were reported as efficient. So far as we know, there are only three schools in this education district that have not applied for registration.

During the year five public schools were not visited. Of these one was opened towards the end of the year, after the rest of the schools in the locality had been inspected, and three household schools were omitted for a similar reason. In the case of a fourth household school the pupils were conveyed to a neighbouring school for examination. This is a commendable course to follow, as it affords the teacher of the household school, who is in most cases either untrained or inexperienced, an opportunity of noting the methods followed and the standard of work attained in a well-conducted school.

*School Buildings.*—Throughout the district the school buildings are in general well cared for, and School Committees continue to take a keen interest in the schools and their surroundings. Considerable progress has been made in connection with the planting of trees, shelter-belts, and native shrubs. Some five thousand plants raised by the Training College students were distributed for this purpose among fifty schools last autumn.

Though in many schools the interest in wall-decorations by means of suitable pictures is being maintained, much still remains to be done with regard to the securing of suitable pictures, and the best use of them when they are procured. At present we feel that in too many cases the teachers forget that pictures should be made to appeal to the soul as well as to the eye, and in order that this may be effected pupils require to be trained to read and to interpret the artist's work.

In several of the city and suburban schools the pressure on the accommodation is very great, and we anticipate that in the very near future considerable expense will have to be faced if the rapidly increasing school population is to be adequately housed.

Many of our teachers appear to have but a poor conception of the power of the playground as an educational medium and a recreative agent for both teacher and pupil; but there are a considerable number who look upon the playground as the "uncovered school," and during the intervals the latter are found discreetly associating with the pupils, tactfully directing them, and learning much regarding the character of individuals. The knowledge so acquired enables them to achieve a success that would be beyond their reach otherwise. We consider that the presence of the teacher in the playground is so necessary as to justify us in attaching great importance to it when estimating the efficiency of the school and the value of the individual teacher.

*Uncertificated Teachers.*—At the end of the year there were in the Board's service ninety-nine unclassified teachers. Of these, fourteen had passed the Matriculation Examination, twenty had been credited with some success in the D or C certificate examination, ten were ex pupil-teachers or probationers who had failed to qualify for entrance to the training college, one was an ex-training-college student, and three had been educated in secondary schools in Britain. Seventy-eight of these teachers were employed in schools of Grades 0, I, and II, and several were only filling temporary vacancies. When the disorganization in other branches of employment is compared with that in the Education service in this district, it will be seen that the latter branch has not been so seriously affected as might have been expected. For the purpose of assisting such of these unclassified teachers as could conveniently attend, week-end courses of instruction were conducted at Dunedin, Oamaru, Balclutha, Owaka, Lawrence, and Alexandra. Notwithstanding the difficulties experienced by many teachers in travelling to the outlying centres, the attendance at these classes was generally satisfactory. In most of the classes the aim was to assist the students to prepare for the D certificate examination, but it is gratifying to record that in several of the classes the instructors, some of whom have been engaged in the work for a number of years, subordinated this aim to the demonstration of good methods of teaching, with a view to assisting the students in their daily work. The courses of instruction comprised English, geography, history, vocal music, methods of teaching, drawing, mathematics, botany, practical agriculture, arithmetic, first aid, and hygiene. We take this opportunity of expressing our appreciation of the ready response made by the instructors to our appeal for help for their less fortunately circumstanced brethren, and also to Dr. Church and the late Dr. Fleming, of Dunedin, Dr. Gladstone, of Alexandra, and Dr. Sutherland, of Lawrence, for the sacrifices they have so generously made in the interests of our teachers at a time when their professional calls were unusually severe. We acknowledge our indebtedness also to Mr. Bone, of the St. John Ambulance Association, for the readiness with which he has arranged to have teachers examined for the first-aid certificate.

*Medical Inspection.*—In our opinion the interest of teachers and parents in the medical inspection of school-children is steadily increasing, and we are convinced that the extent to which parents follow the advice so readily given by Dr. Ada G. Paterson is limited only by the expense or the difficulty of obtaining competent assistance. As an example of the desire of parents to further the physical well-being of their children we would point out that upwards of three hundred children attended the first parade of pupils for the formation of classes for corrective or remedial exercises during the Christmas vacation, and many of them were accompanied by their parents.

*Physical Instruction.*—During April and May camps for the physical instruction of teachers were held at Tahuna Park, and all the teachers then in the Board's service were given a fortnight's instruction in the course adopted by the Department, and that course is now in operation in nearly all the schools. The teachers who underwent the fortnight's training derived considerable benefit personally, and showed increased interest in their treatment of the work; but so far as the schools are concerned, the course has been so short a time in operation that it is not possible to say that we find any marked