seek to give at four of our district high schools in North Canterbury—viz., Lincoln, Darfield, Oxford, and Kaikoura—and we make bold to say that this information could not in the majority of cases be imparted by the farmers to their sons and employees on account of the comparatively recent origin of many of our now established facts. Let us give our boys every chance!

We cannot and do not teach farming—*i.e.*, the business of agriculture—that can only be learnt on the farm itself; but we can and do teach something of the science of agriculture. We owe it to our boys to give them all we can to enable them to keep New Zealand abreast of the times. The paying farm of to-day worked on similar lines to-morrow may be a failure. The boy cannot learn on the farm what we teach at the schools, though he may see the application of much that he learns. The rural course is intended to be equally applicable to the training of the future business and professional men as to the training of the future farmer. It caters for the Civil Service Examinations, and for Matriculation, and pupils are annually put up for these examinations. Each year the Education Board's agricultural instructors give to each school 200 hours' instruction in the special subjects of the course, comprising: (1) The principles of scientific agriculture; (2) dairy science; (3) agricultural chemistry; (4) agricultural botany, and farm and orchard pests; (5) anatomy and nutrition of farm animals; (6) physics, elementary surveying, and mensuration. Woodwork, cooking, dressmaking, and laundry-work are usually taught in addition by special instructors, leaving three to three days and a half per week for English, arithmetic, mathematics, languages, &c.

A very small percentage of our children are getting any secondary education or special instruction of any kind, and we earnestly ask parents and farmers to consider the position, especially when in most cases the instruction is free. The gardens attached to the schools exist mainly to grow the crops required for study, not to teach farming, as some suppose, though co-operative variety trials are also being carried out with the Agricultural Department.

SOUTH CANTERBURY.

Extract from the Report of the Director of Technical Education.

The rural courses of instruction taken in connection with the district high schools were carried out in a much more practical manner than heretofore. The gardens at Temuka and Pleasant Point have now been established for about five years, and they are beginning to show some result for the labour that has been expended on them. Waimate has again taken on the course, and for the purpose of carrying out the work practically a section containing 1½ acres of land, situated in the centre of the town, has been leased by the Board. Already this section has been laid out in experimental plots planted with fruit-trees, and the farmers in the district are evincing considerable interest in the experiments carried on by the pupils. In connection with this course 135 pupils received instruction in agriculture, dairy science, agricultural zoology, agricultural botany, agricultural chemistry, physics, dressmaking, home science, cookery, hygiene, surveying, and woodwork.

OTAGO.

Extract from the Report of the Inspectors of Schools.

In the secondary departments of the district high schools the standard of work in the various branches has been well maintained in spite of the fact that in three of them the work has been dislocated to some extent by changes in the staff. English continues to receive satisfactory treatment, and the teaching in mathematics is on modern lines. Latin and French are generally well taught up to matriculation standard, and the teaching in science is conducted on good practical lines. In six of these schools the rural course is in full operation, and provides a four-years course, though but few of the pupils continue for the whole course. At the end of the second year many of the pupils present themselves for the Intermediate and Public Service Junior and the Senior Scholarship Examinations, while others at the end of their third and fourth years face the Intermediate, Matriculation, or D certificate examinations. The results that have attended the efforts of these pupils show that the science course is helpful rather than prejudicial to success in these examinations.

In the well-equipped laboratories provided in the six centres each pupil carries out the experiments necessary to illustrate the facts that are to become part of his mental equipment. The result has been increased interest in practical work, especially in agriculture, and this is attested by the fact that the yields from the garden-plots this year are in excess of those previously obtained. In all these schools attention has been given to the æsthetic side of the work in the attempts made to beautify the school-grounds by planting shrubs and trees, the care of which now forms part of the routine work of scholars. The number of pupils who took the full rural course has been well maintained. The hearty co-operation of the head teachers and staffs of the district high schools with the itinerant instructors has done much to strengthen the course in the schools.

With regard to efficiency we group the schools of the district as follows: Excellent or very good, 24 per cent.; good, 40 per cent.; satisfactory, 28 per cent.; fair to inferior, 8 per cent. The percentage of schools below the mark "good" has risen by 3 per cent., while the percentage of the best group has fallen by 3 per cent. This change for the worse is in the main due to frequent changes in the staffs of rural schools, and to the dislocation of work that invariably follows such changes.