

fair to satisfactory, 20; fair, 5; efficient, 101; non-efficient, 25. For 1917—Efficient, 100 schools; non-efficient, 17. The twenty-five non-efficient schools are all under sole teachers. The difficulty of obtaining teachers for these positions seems to be increasing, notwithstanding the many improvements that have in recent years been made in connection with salaries. Inability to obtain suitable lodgings, or in some cases to get any at all, and remoteness from facilities for study, are two of the factors which appear to deter teachers from holding these positions long. How to assist these inexperienced and untrained teachers in the practical conduct of the school is a matter of some difficulty. The time at our disposal when visiting these schools is too limited to effect much, but at the announced visit we invariably examine all standard pupils for classification. Not only is too little attention often devoted to preparatory and junior pupils in these small schools, but the methods of instruction are frequently faulty. Our estimate of the efficiency of schools in the various subjects is as follows:—

	Reading.	Writing.	Spelling.	Composition.	Arithmetic.
Efficient	100	110	82	98	77
Non-efficient	23	13	41	24	46

School Buildings.—The greater number of the school buildings are in a fairly satisfactory state of repair, and the Board, in pursuance of its policy of last year, is systematically continuing the painting of all buildings. In some schools minor repairs are often too long neglected, the difficulty of getting suitable labour to carry them out causing the delay. In some cases outhouses do not receive the supervision or attention that should be given to them. In view of the paramount importance of the proper care of these buildings for sanitary reasons alone, it behoves all those in charge of them to exercise a very exact and constant supervision over them. On more than one occasion we have had cause to complain of either Committee or teacher in this respect.

Handwork.—The usual branches of handwork were carried out in the schools of the district, the subjects treated in order of preference being plasticine-modelling, free-arm drawing, brush-work, cardboard-modelling and carton-work, brick-building and paper-folding. The work was to some extent hampered by inability to obtain regular supplies of the necessary materials. The following is a list of the manual-training classes, which were conducted at the same centres as last year: Elementary agriculture, 58; dairy-work, 13; physiology and first aid, 14; swimming, 12; elementary physical measurements, 2; metal-work, 11; woodwork, 12; domestic science, 22. Altogether the pupils of seventy-two schools were taught some branch of manual instruction.

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

Medical Inspection and Physical Instruction.—The usual medical inspection was carried out by the Medical Inspector of Schools, some 1,632 children being examined. This year the inspection was supplemented by the visit of a school-nurse to the homes of pupils reported by the Medical Inspector as requiring treatment. Except in schools where teachers have had no opportunity of special training, physical instruction is being very satisfactorily conducted, many teachers entering with enthusiasm into the intended spirit of the training. Arrangements had almost been completed for holding a refresher camp at Cable Bay when the influenza broke out, and the whole matter had to be abandoned. From observations made concerning pupils selected for corrective treatment the previous year it would appear that considerable benefit is resulting, as many cases show decided improvement.

We have, &c.,

The Director of Education, Wellington. G. A. HARKNESS, } Inspectors.
A. CRAWFORD, }

CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 23rd April, 1919.

We have the honour to present our annual report for the year ending 1918.

The number of public schools open at the close of the year was 387. Two visits were paid to nearly all of these. Thirty-one private schools were also inspected. The influenza epidemic during the last two months of the year interfered very seriously with our work and caused the postponement of some of the examinations for an indefinite period.

In connection with the proficiency certificates we have had to depend largely upon the results of the headmasters' examinations, and gratefully acknowledge the valuable assistance afforded and the care taken in weighing the claims of candidates. The following is a summary of the results of the proficiency examination:—

	Number presented.	Proficiency.	Competency.
Public schools	2,647	1,824	504
Private schools	328	232	67
Special examinations	18	6	5
Total	2,993	2,062	576

That is, 68 per cent. of those presenting themselves obtained proficiency and 19 per cent. competency certificates.

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