

in the case of those students who make satisfactory progress. As a considerable number of training-college students with a full C certificate will be available this year, we intend to advise the Education Board to call for applications from certificated teachers for those positions at present filled by uncertificated teachers who are making little or no attempt to improve their professional status.

Physical Instruction.—In nearly all the schools in Otago physical instruction has been given regularly. In a few country schools where the instruction has been given periodically instead of daily the teachers have been directed to make the exercises a daily lesson. In the majority of cases these exercises have been faithfully carried out, and in many schools, more particularly perhaps in the larger ones, they have been well done, suitable attention being paid to right position and correct breathing. In some schools, however, the exercises have become too mechanical, thus diminishing both their educational and developmental effects. The physical instructors express the opinion that “there is great need for refresher classes for the teachers.” Classes for the instruction of pupil-teachers and probationers were held during the year. Swimming is taught in a number of schools, and in many organized games form a part of the school programme. Lessons on health and temperance also receive due attention.

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

Buildings and Accommodation.—The buildings and grounds of the district are, in general, in very good order, only seven being reported as below satisfactory. Some of these are small schools in the backblocks, repairs to which have been allowed to stand over while prices for building-material are high. Most of the School Committees take great interest in their schools, and co-operate heartily with the teacher in endeavouring to improve the surroundings of the children, and in many cases the residents readily subscribe for anything that will effect improvement in the school. While in some parts, more especially in some of the country districts, the number on the roll has decreased, and the accommodation is more than sufficient for the number now attending, there are other parts of the district—notably Dunedin City and some of the country towns—where increased accommodation will be necessary. During the year the Board offered an increased subsidy on contributions for school libraries and pictures suitable for a schoolroom. We hope Committees will not hesitate to take advantage of this offer. We beg to suggest also that the Government be asked to supply some pictures illustrating the doings of our brave boys on the various war fronts. Very suitable ones have already been appearing in the illustrated papers, and some of these, if well chosen, will afford excellent material for lessons on civics, and will be an inspiration to the coming generation as concrete illustrations of what service to the community really means.

Self-government.—At its last meeting the Council of Education passed a resolution to the effect “that with a view of affording concrete illustrations of the fundamental facts of social problems more use should be made in the schools of some system of self-government.” In many schools more has been done by the teachers in training the children to govern themselves than is generally known. The question has been receiving the attention of writers on education, and in this, as in most questions, there are found extremists, yet it will perhaps be found advisable to move slowly. One writer in contrasting the military ideal of discipline with the democratic ideal says: “We shall seek rather to form habits of service and responsibility through devotion to the community or smaller groups in which the child is placed, and so to develop the sense of fellowship which is the foundation of patriotism and good citizenship. Just as the old discipline, half pipe-clay and half brutality, is being changed into something finer and more intelligent in our new armies—the outcome of toils and dangers shared and of the consciousness of a common purpose—so too in our schools we want a discipline based on a sense of fellowship and the service of the community.” This is the ideal our teachers have been aiming at, and the furnace of war through which the Empire has passed has given this ideal a severe test. We are proud of the part New Zealand has taken in the war. Her young men enlisted readily, and in courage and skill on the battlefields they showed themselves equal to the best soldiers. Have not our education system and its administration at least some claim to a part of the credit for this? We do not propose dealing with the general question of reconstruction after the war. On this point Dr. Michael Sadler says, “It may be predicted, however, that as a result of the war the character-forming influences in British education will be imitated in Germany, and that on the other hand German zeal in encouraging research and technological training will receive closer attention from the British Government.” While our aims for improvement will probably be on materialistic lines, one great lesson we can learn from the war is that we must not loosen our hold on what has been the main ideal of British education, for it is spiritual influence and not purely material aims that can render the most indispensable service to education.

We have, &c.,

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