

supplementary continuous readers in sufficient numbers for class reading in P to S6 inclusive, and also for the free supply of class-books in necessitous cases or in cases where a newly entered pupil had already purchased elsewhere class-books different from those in use in the school. After provision is made for the supply of such books, the balance of the grant, if any, may be spent on approved books suitable for individual reading in school or at home.

- (b.) Further to encourage the establishment and the satisfactory maintenance of school libraries provision is made for the payment of subsidies of £1 for £1 on moneys raised by voluntary contributions. In addition to this departmental subsidy a subsidy is payable by the Education Board, but the Board is not required to pay a sum exceeding 3d. for each child in average attendance at a school, or exceeding £5 for any one school. The books purchased are to be suitable for individual reading in school or at home, and are to be approved by the Senior Inspector.

Precautions are taken to save parents from expense in purchasing new books on account of their moving from one district to another, and complaints on this matter are now rare.

SUBSIDIES ON VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

In addition to the subsidies mentioned above with respect to school libraries, under section 159 of the Education Act subsidies of £1 for £1 are payable on voluntary contributions for many other school purposes prescribed by regulation. The total amount approved as subsidies in connection with public schools for the financial year ending 31st March last was £10,003, a figure showing each year a substantial increase, and indicating that School Committees are becoming more fully aware that any efforts they may make in the direction of providing funds for improving their schools and grounds are recognized by the payment of a Government subsidy. By this means many schools have been enabled to carry out desirable works somewhat beyond their own unaided efforts, and the provision of the Act has served as an excellent stimulus to self-help.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

The Department has a staff of fifteen physical instructors and one Chief Instructor, who supervise and inspect the work of physical education. The instructors visited the large majority of the schools in 1920, inspecting the work of some 140,000 children. The work is reported to be well carried out in schools where the teachers have had sufficient training; there is, however, much need for the further training of the teachers, many of whom have had no training at all, and others only a short course some years ago. A new syllabus of physical instruction has recently been issued which is considered an improvement in many respects on the previous syllabus, but which also necessitates further training for the teachers. The syllabus prescribes a period of fifteen minutes for physical instruction; in other countries a longer period is given, and the opinion is expressed that an extension of the period in New Zealand would be beneficial. In schools where the best results are found more than the regulation time has been devoted to the subject. A decided improvement is reported in the physique of children—especially girls—who have regular physical training. Particular attention is paid to corrective classes, which are organized especially for children with some physical defect, and many children who would otherwise always suffer from some physical disability are assured to a great extent of attaining a normal physique. The physical instructors' best opportunity of disseminating a knowledge of the work is in the training colleges, where they are able to give the students a comprehensive training before they go out into the schools as teachers.

MEDICAL INSPECTION.

The administration of the work of medical inspection of school-children and school dentistry has now been assumed by the Department of Public Health, and reference to the work carried out in 1920 will be found in the annual report of that Department.