

speaking, is very satisfactory indeed. The schools from the point of view of efficiency may be classified as follows: Very good to excellent, 47; satisfactory to good, 63; inferior to weak, 9. During the year sixty-five certificates of proficiency and twenty-eight of competency were awarded to pupils in the Sixth Standard of the village schools.

The methods of teaching employed in the great majority of the schools may be described as very effective, the pupils on the whole receiving a good training in the habits of initiative and self-reliance, and their reasoning and observing powers being well developed. In a considerable number of schools the preparation of the schemes of work leave much to be desired; particularly is this the case in language instruction, oral and written English. The importance of careful supervision of the work of the assistants by the head teachers, and of the need, on the part of all teachers, for the preparation of the lessons to be taught, must again be stressed. The number of certificated teachers in the service is gradually increasing, and it is gratifying to observe that several teachers were successful at the last teachers' examination. As all certificated teachers throughout the Dominion are now graded, and as a grading increment is paid in addition to the scale salary, the possession of a certificate carries with it a monetary consideration which should prove an inducement to teachers to improve their status.

A few more schools have introduced the system by which children who bring their lunch to school are supplied during the winter months with a cup of hot cocoa at the midday meal. The teachers of the schools where the practice is now in vogue are to be commended for their efforts in this direction. They report that the making of the necessary arrangements involved little trouble, and that the interest and co-operation of the parents were readily obtained. They are confident that their pupils have benefited from a health point of view.

The annual picnic and the annual concert are now recognized as regular institutions in a very large number of schools.

The standard classification of the pupils in the Native village schools as shown at the 31st December, 1920, was as follows:—

Classes.						Number on Roll.
Standard VII	..	..	..	..	..	47
„ VI	..	..	..	..	..	221
„ V	..	..	..	..	..	348
„ IV	..	..	..	..	..	436
„ III	..	..	..	..	..	592
„ II	..	..	..	..	..	679
„ I	..	..	..	..	..	626
Preparatory	..	..	..	..	..	2,559
Total	..	..	..	..	..	5,508

SALARIES.

During the past year further amendments were made, under the Education Act, 1914, in the regulations relating to salaries; and the salaries and allowances of head and sole teachers of Native schools were, in conformity with those of public-school teachers in corresponding positions, further improved as from the 1st April, 1920. The salaries of assistants were also materially improved.

The following table shows the increase in the amount paid to teachers as salaries for each period of five years from 1905:—

Year.				Number of Teachers.	Average Attendance of Pupils.	Total Salaries.
						£
1905	..	..	..	182	3,428	15,980
1910	..	..	..	208	3,714	23,184
1915	..	..	..	244	4,604	30,927
1920	..	..	..	263	4,639	53,712

Of the total expenditure on Native schools during the year 1920 the salaries, including allowances paid to the teachers, form 75 per cent.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The following remarks are submitted in regard to the various subjects of the school course:—

English Subjects.—Reading: The chief defect in reading in quite a large number of schools is the failure of the pupils to show that they satisfactorily comprehend the subject-matter of what they read. The main purpose in the teaching of reading is to enable the pupils to comprehend the thought of what they read, and this aim must ever be before the mind of the teacher. Reading is too often regarded by teachers as vocal expression, and the result is that many children are not taught to read in the true sense. This attitude on the part of the teacher may be assumed unconsciously, because the mechanical aspect of the teaching of reading bulks so largely in the work, particularly in the junior classes. It requires little reflection, however, to perceive that the mere pronouncing of words not associated by the pupils with their experience and knowledge is practically of no value; consequently, although importance must naturally be attached to the mechanical part of reading, the thought side must not be neglected, and the mastery of new thoughts related to the experience of