

A modified form of what is known as the Dalton plan has for some months been in operation in a division of a secondary department of a district high school in this district, the subjects treated being English, history, algebra, and mathematics. The headmaster considers it has been successful, and proposes to extend the method to the senior classes and to include geography and geometry. The Inspectors are inclined to recommend that, for the present, experiments of this nature should be confined to the secondary department, the primary pupils being, they think, too immature mentally to work independently of the help and guidance of the teacher.

(4.) The Inspectors note with approval the increasing number of schools where the services of the pupils are utilized in carrying out playground supervision. The staff are thereby relieved of many small duties, and the pupils receive a good training for using, with advantage to themselves and others, the larger liberty which will be theirs on leaving school.

(5.) District high schools: Of forty-nine pupils in the secondary departments last year, thirty-six obtained either a full or a partial pass in the Matriculation Examination. The lengthening of the Matriculation course in these schools to four years is deemed advisable, to ensure more thorough and better assimilated work and a sounder preparation for advanced work in the case of those who are looking forward to a University course.

(6.) Physical instruction: The physical instructors have during the year reported upon the work of 368 teachers, the results being as follows: 27 were excellent, 130 very good, 126 good, 77 very satisfactory, 7 satisfactory, and 1 fair.

(7.) Special attention is directed to the modes of instruction in reading and composition, and valuable advice is given regarding the teaching of these subjects. The Inspectors are of opinion that the standard of marking adopted by the headmasters in their term examinations in these subjects, especially in Standard VI, is too low, and should be raised.

Of the 2,003 pupils who in 1922 left the primary schools in this district, 1,505 (or 75 per cent.) had passed Standard VI, and 498 (or 25 per cent.) had not passed that standard.

*Public-school Certificates.*—Of the 2,074 pupils in Standard VI in the public schools at the time of the annual examinations, 72.9 per cent. gained proficiency certificates, 12.3 per cent. gained competency certificates, and 14.8 per cent. failed. Of the competency certificates, eleven were endorsed for admission to a technical school. The proficiency results were lower by 3.1 per cent. than in the previous year, and by 7.1 per cent. than in 1920.

*Manual and Technical.*—In all schools instruction in elementary handwork (paper-work, cardboard, plasticine, brushwork) was given as prescribed by the syllabus. Cookery classes were conducted at thirteen centres and woodwork at 12 centres; thirty-two schools took part in the cookery instruction and thirty-one in the woodwork instruction. Swimming and life-saving classes for the pupils of Standard IV were held as formerly at the Dunedin Municipal Baths, and similar classes for the pupils of Standards IV, V, and VI were conducted at the Oamaru Municipal Baths, and also at the Alexandra, Coal Creek, Duntroon, Tapanui, Waiholā, and Naseby Schools. The average attendances at these special classes were: Cookery, 1,315; woodwork, 1,471; swimming and life-saving, 1,332. The expenditure on manual and technical instruction was: Salaries, material, &c., for school classes, £6,231 13s. 9d.; buildings, furniture, and fittings, £1,949 17s.; total, £8,180 10s. 9d.—being a decrease of £3,447 9s. 1d. as compared with the previous year.

*Agricultural Instruction.*—That the lessons, problems, and manual work associated with a well-managed school-garden can be made to contribute materially towards fulfilling the aims of primary education becomes increasingly apparent each succeeding year. It is also gratifying to note that in most of the city schools arrangements have been made for the use of contiguous areas to permit of instruction in elementary agriculture being co-ordinated with the other subjects of the school course. Such co-ordination is no less vital to city children than to those in the country. During the year classes were recognized in 207 primary schools, and the rural science course was followed in the district high schools. The Board continued its support of the efforts which are being made towards improving the school amenities, by arranging for the distribution of 4,100 additional ornamental shrubs from the Training College students' garden. This annual assistance during the past eight years is reflected in a marked improvement of the grounds of the recipient schools.

*School Buildings.*—The work of the building department for the year just concluded has been much the same as in recent years. Prices are not by any means back to normal, and for this reason the amount of work that can be carried out is restricted to essentials. Steady progress is, however, being made in overtaking work that fell behind during the war period, and it is hoped soon to have our buildings again in quite a satisfactory condition. This does not apply to interior painting, which cannot be said to be such an urgent matter. In addition to ordinary repairs and painting, &c., the work carried out has included a new brick building at Anderson's Bay to accommodate the infant classes, and a detached building at Seacliff to provide an additional class-room. The Seacliff Committee and residents contributed handsomely towards the erection of their building. Some work has been done in the direction of improving schoolrooms, and providing extra rooms when this could be done at small cost by slight alterations to gymnasiums, or by subdividing rooms too large for present needs. Schools at which such work has been effected include Karitane, Mosgiel, Macandrew Road, Port Chalmers, Weston, and Teaneraki. At Beaumont a hall has been brought into use, and at Musselburgh a church building is being rented. The school hall at Wakari has been enlarged, this work being carried out by the Committee, with the Board's assistance. A good deal of interior renovation has been done to teachers' residences, changes of teachers in the majority of cases making this necessary. The teacher's cottage at Otanomomo has been shifted to a new site beside the school. Outhouses have been renewed and shelter-sheds erected at quite a number of schools. The grounds at North-east Valley, North-east Harbour, and Awamoko have been extended and improved.