

Curriculum of Secondary Schools.—There can be no doubt that the curriculum of many secondary schools is in urgent need of revision, too great a tax being made upon the pupils therein. From recent discussions in the press it is clear that parents are becoming increasingly concerned. A questionnaire was last year submitted to all applicants for entrance into the teaching profession in order to obtain information regarding the physical and mental demand made by school life. From the answers given it appears that a considerable proportion of secondary-school pupils spend three hours and over in the preparation of home-work. In many cases the fatigue of manual work at home or of a long journey to school, with an inadequate midday meal, is added. At the conference of the New Zealand Branch of the British Medical Association held in Wellington at the beginning of this year the Preventive Medicine Section of the Conference (composed largely of School Medical Officers) discussed the question of medical examination of teachers and the physical condition of applicants for entrance into the teaching profession. The following resolution was passed: "After consideration of information furnished by answers to a questionnaire issued to secondary-school pupils, and from the evidence afforded by the reports of their medical examination, this meeting of the Preventive Medicine Section, New Zealand Branch of B.M.A., Wellington, 21/2/29, is of the opinion that the amount of study outside school hours required from such pupils is excessive and therefore prejudicial to their physical and mental welfare." Two hours preparation at home-work is the maximum which should be required of secondary-school pupils.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS : OPEN-AIR SCHOOLS.

Schools erected by the Education Department in recent years show progress in their recognition of open-air principles. In one or two of them vita-glass has been introduced, and observation will be made to determine its effect (if any) on the health and nutrition of pupils.

The Open-air Schools League in Canterbury (largely a civic effort) continues to flourish, and to its energy and enthusiasm may be attributed in great measure the demand for open-air schools of the "Fendalton" type in that district.

School-cleaning and Sanitation.—Special attention is being paid by School Medical Officers in reporting on school-cleaning and sanitation. In many country districts, especially where labour is scarce and no water-carriage system available, there is great need for improvement in this direction.

SPECIAL INQUIRIES.

The reports of two investigations—(1) "The Posture of New Zealand School-children" (Dr. Helen Bakewell), and (2) "Maori and Pakeha—Study in Comparative Health" (Dr. Harold Turbott)—will be found published in the Appendix.

The School Hygiene Division wishes to express appreciation to the Education Department, various Education Boards, School Committees, and teachers for much valuable co-operation.

A. G. PATERSON,
Director, Division of School Hygiene.

PART IV.—DENTAL HYGIENE.

In connection with the work of my Division, I beg to submit a report for the year ending 31st March, 1929 :—

SECTION 1.—STAFF, CLINICS, ETC.

Staff.—The allocation of the staff of the Division is as follows : Wellington—Mr. J. L. Saunders, B.D.S., Deputy-Director, Division of Dental Hygiene ; Mr. R. D. Elliott, Inspecting Dental Officer ; Mr. F. B. Rice, B.D.S., Inspecting Dental Officer ; Mr. J. B. Bibby, Clinical Demonstrator ; Mr. A. D. Brice, B.D.S., Clinical Demonstrator ; Miss E. M. Haines, Senior Dental Nurse.

In the field, eight dental officers and seventy-four dental nurses, stationed as follows : Dental officers—One at Christchurch, one at Dunedin, one at Motueka, one at Nelson, one at North Auckland, one at Tikitiki, one at Timaru, one at Wellington. Dental nurses—One at Avondale, one at Beresford Street, one at Cambridge, one at Dannevirke, one at Dargaville, one at Eltham, one at Feilding, one at Grey Lynn, one at Greytown, two at Gisborne, two at Hamilton, one at Hastings, one at Hawera, one at Henderson, one at Huntly, one at Lower Hutt, one at Marton, one at Masterton, one at Morrinsville, two at Napier, two at New Plymouth, one at Onehunga, one at Paeroa, one at Pahiatua, two at Palmerston North, one at Papakura, two at Ponsonby, one at Stratford, one at Taumarunui, one at Tauranga, one at Te Awamutu, one at Te Kuiti, one at Thames, one at Waipukurau, one at Wairarapa, one at Wanganui, one at Whangarei, one at Alexandra, one at Ashburton, one at Balclutha, one at Beckenham, two at Blenheim, one at Christchurch East, one at Dunedin, one at Dunedin South, one at Greymouth, one at Gore, two at Invercargill, one at Lyttelton, one at Mosgiel, one at Nelson, one at Oamaru, one at Otautau, one at Palmerston South, one at Reefton, one at St. Albans, one at Sydenham, one at Tapanui, one at Temuka, one at Timaru, one at Waimate, two at Westport, one at Winton, one at Woolston, one at Rarotonga. Owing to the resignations from the Service, the clinics at Edendale, New Brighton, and Hokitika have been closed for a part of the year, but at this date the positions have been filled.