

In history most schools have used reading-books, and in some these have been combined with oral lessons with fairly satisfactory results; but the idea that the study of history, when properly conducted, is of high moral value is not fully realised by many of our teachers. Leading incidents in our history can be brought before young children by means of stories of great men, and an intelligent interest in individuals can thus be aroused. At a later stage it can be pointed out that these men were leaders in certain movements, that they represented the spirit of their time, and thus gradually the growth of the British constitutions can be dealt with. Such stories should be well told, and, to make them living, they should be associated with something coming within the experience of the children. If we trace the struggle for freedom through the course of British history, we meet with so many examples of heroism, of self-sacrifice, of devotion to principles, of true patriotism in fact, that lessons so chosen cannot fail to inspire and awaken a spirit of emulation. The early struggles of the pioneers of our colony afford many such examples, and these, if utilised by the teacher, would do much to make a New-Zealander more thoroughly realise the obligation he is under to do his share, however small, towards making the future of our colony worthy of the best traditions of the British race.

During the year the cadets were inspected by Lieut.-Colonel Loveday, who expressed himself as satisfied with the progress made in the equipment and drill of the corps in the district as a whole. He has also forwarded us a report on each school. The physical drill taken in the schools consists of free exercises and exercises with clubs, dumb-bells, or poles. These exercises are generally fairly satisfactory, though in many cases special breathing exercises should be given, and more attention should be paid to the recommendations of the syllabus. In six schools where the exercises were not systematically given, arrangements were made at the annual visit for the instruction to be given on better lines. This subject was marked as "Good" or "Very good" in sixty-one schools.

Good work is being done in drawing. Handwork is also finding more favour with our teachers. Eighty-six schools have claimed capitation under the Manual and Technical Instruction Act, and nearly all the subjects mentioned in clauses 19, 20, and 21 of the regulations under the Act are represented on these claims, plasticine and brush drawing being the favourite subjects. Other subjects represented are first aid and ambulance, swimming, cottage-gardening, elementary agriculture, elementary physics, and elementary chemistry.

INSTRUCTION TO TEACHERS.—The cooking classes under Miss Millington and Mrs. Neeley were continued as before, and the Saturday classes for teachers at Wellington, Masterton, and Pahiatua were well attended. The teachers' classes for physical instruction have made a decided improvement in the physical drill of many schools, more especially in the free exercises and in the exercises with clubs and dumb-bells. When the district high schools are in working-order and the much-needed training-college established, all these classes will require to be reorganized.

With one exception all the pupil-teachers in the service were promoted on their work for the year. The Board has decided to make new regulations, the chief change being the abolition of the four annual examinations during the term of service, and the substitution of two examinations in their place, the Junior Civil Service Examination at the end of the second year and the Matriculation or D Certificate Examination at the end of the fourth.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—In 1904 the Board adopted new scholarship regulations. Senior scholarships have been established for pupils under sixteen years of age, and the age for the junior scholarships has been reduced from fifteen to fourteen. The schools have been reclassified, and a more liberal allowance has been made for the small country schools. The National Scholarship Examination has been adopted, with this advantage, that, while there are three scholarships—National, Queen's, and Board—for which a child can compete, the awards are made on one examination.

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.—A marked feature of the year has been the extension of the district high-school system to different centres in the district. At Masterton and Pahiatua secondary departments have been in operation for some time, and permission has now been granted to Levin, Hutt, Greytown, Petone, Terrace, and Newtown to establish classes for higher work. The object of the district high school, as we understand it, is to give facilities for higher education to children who, from financial and other reasons, would not be able to receive any secondary training. To obtain this benefit, their parents are willing to delay the withdrawal of their children from school for some two or three years after the completion of a course in the primary school. The question at once arises, "What is the best curriculum for a school of this class?" A recent writer on "The Choice of Studies" has said, "A rationally conceived curriculum must be the resultant of these two forces, the nature of the child and the requirements of the community." Both these factors have been overlooked in the past, and will be neglected in the future if the curriculum is to consist only of those subjects which form the usual high-school course, selected because the mental discipline afforded has hitherto been considered of inestimable value. Again, to select subjects from the bread-and-butter point of view alone would perhaps be as serious a mistake. The idea that finds most favour to-day is that the studies of the last year or two of school life should be arranged "so as to allow of some preparation in a general way for a pupil's future occupation, but not so as to invade the province of those institutions which prepare directly for special trades and professions." That the education afforded to children entering these schools should have a direct bearing on their future life—that is, should be adapted to their environment—is now generally admitted by educational authorities. If we look at schools established to meet similar needs in Great Britain, France, Germany, and elsewhere, we find that courses of work on scientific, commercial, and industrial lines have been adopted, and the necessity for a wide educational training has also been kept in view. These courses have been drawn up, not as preliminary courses to university work, but as finishing courses to prepare the pupil for his future occupation. The District High School Regulations of the Department have been drawn up to allow of the adoption of such courses, and our district high schools should adopt courses of work suitable to the environment of each. A good training in English and arithmetic (including mensuration), geography, and history taught to make the children