

out last year, the singing in a school derives no benefit from the use of an instrument unless the instrument is used with great discretion, and except in the case of schools having a large infant department we are altogether opposed to the introduction of organs. The only instrument required is a tuning-fork or a pitch-pipe, and in some of the schools even these are wanting.

Physical Instruction.—On the whole, this subject may be regarded as satisfactory. In many schools it is excellent, while in some it is entirely perfunctory in character and without benefit. Breathing exercises form part of the daily routine in most of our schools, the exercises being done out-of-doors for a few minutes, generally at the time of assembly. One of the chief objects aimed at in breathing exercises is the development of a correct habit of breathing; and the more frequent the exercise the better the results. We were much struck with the efficiency in drill exhibited in several of the schools where a selection from the "Manual of Physical Instruction," recently supplied by the Department, formed the programme. The importance of organized games as an educational factor is now receiving recognition at the hands of various school authorities, and we think that teachers would do well to give this matter their attention. "There is no better work in the field of education than to inculcate a wholesome love for the games in the playground; for to do this means the creation of an *esprit de corps*, and a readiness to endure fatigue, to submit to discipline, and to subordinate one's own powers and wishes to a common end." The introduction of these games would afford the teacher the opportunity of getting into closer touch with his pupils, and since they would be carried on under his supervision, the disorganized rough-and-tumble that is sometimes complained of would be prevented. We see no reason why during the hot weather swimming should not be substituted at regular intervals for the ordinary physical drill, life-saving lessons being included in the instruction, as has already been done at Te Kao School.

SYLLABUS.

The teachers are gradually accustoming themselves to the conditions of the new syllabus, and there does not appear to be much difficulty in its working. Schemes of work are better drawn up than they were last year, and the term examinations are organized on better lines. The records of the work done by the pupils show in many cases distinct progress, and in the best schools the work is surprisingly good. We have again, however, to remind teachers that the promotion of a whole class is not necessary, even though it may seem desirable. The teacher who always estimates the pupils' work at a high value may have too low a conception of the standard required, and we note with satisfaction that the best teachers are content to "hasten slowly" in the promotion of pupils whom they feel to be unworthy of it.

The pamphlet containing "Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and Others concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools," which is published by the Board of Education in England, and from which we have quoted various passages, seems to us to contain so much valuable information on teaching and school management generally that we recommend that copies be supplied to every Native school. We trust that when the pamphlet comes to hand teachers will give their earnest consideration to the excellent precepts contained in it, and we feel sure that they will derive very great assistance from a study of it.

TEACHERS' CERTIFICATES.

After the end of the current year (1910) the salaries of uncertificated teachers in the Native-schools service will be subject to reduction in terms of the regulations under the Education Amendment Act, 1908. It is provided, however, that the salary of any teacher appointed before the end of the year 1910 shall not be reduced below what was payable to him on the 31st December, 1910. The number of certificated teachers is gradually increasing, and several of the younger members of the staff are now preparing themselves to qualify for certificates—a step which we consider very desirable both in their own interest and in that of the service. At the same time it must not be thought that the uncertificated Native-school teacher is *ipso facto* incompetent; indeed, this is very far from being the case. Many of our teachers, in spite of their being uncertificated, have proved conclusively by the able management of their schools that the absence of a certificate does not always mean lack of efficiency in teaching. And it is a matter of surprise to us that these teachers have not taken the trouble to obtain what is popularly regarded as the hallmark of the teacher, seeing that they already possess so many of the essential qualifications for it.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

In connection with the organization and conduct of the schools we desire to make a few remarks also upon what is known in some parts as "environment." By this is understood the general appearance of the school premises as regards tidiness and attractiveness. Many of the schools are, we consider, remarkably clean, the interior of some that have been in constant use for over twenty years being even yet almost spotless. No funds are provided for the purpose of school cleaning, the work being done usually by the elder children under the supervision of the teacher. Desks defaced or stained by ink are matters of reproach to most of our pupils, whose provisions for keeping their desks clean are sometimes almost amusing.

There remain still, however, many directions in which the "environment" may be considerably improved. The interior of the schools could be made far brighter and far more attractive by an orderly arrangement of the books and material, a clean fireplace, a few pictures, and perhaps some flowers or ferns. These could be placed under the charge of groups of children, whose co-operation it is not difficult to obtain, as is shown in the schools where the plan is in vogue.

The external appearance concerns the teacher more directly, and consists in his having the grounds and gardens neat and tidy. The difference in the appearance of individual schools in