

in which Britain has taken part and to the present distribution of territory in the world in general and in Europe in particular. There is no doubt that the time is opportune for the inauguration of a more thorough system of teaching history as the basis for the study of civics and general social problems. Confronted as we are by the result of such teaching in Germany, the need of a more systematic study of history and allied subjects assumes the proportions of a national duty.

*Elementary Science, Drawing, and Handwork.*—[See E.-5, Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.]

*Physical Instruction.*—In all schools of Grade I and upwards physical instruction is given regularly, and the exercises are confined to the simple breathing and free exercises laid down in the tables published by the Physical Instruction Department. Many schools have been doing similar exercises for some years, but since the camps for instruction of all the teachers in the service were held there has been a general improvement in the physical training given in all the schools, one result of which is that breathing exercises are practised more efficiently than formerly. As these exercises are designed to “suit the age and intelligence as well as the physical requirement of the child,” each individual child should receive attention. School classes, however, more especially in the larger schools, are in many cases too large for this purpose to be efficiently carried out, and there is often a tendency on the part of the teacher to demand merely a mechanical reproduction of certain movements, without that appropriate application of the exercise to each individual child which is necessary if the physical training is to be of any real benefit. The assembling of teachers in camps for physical instruction, besides giving a decided impetus to physical training itself, has proved to be of advantage to the service generally. Other educational questions are discussed, methods of instruction compared, and the interest of every teacher in his work is quickened for a time; but if this quickened interest is to be maintained “refresher” camps should be held at intervals.

*District High Schools.*—[See E.-6, Report on Secondary Education.]

The coming into operation of the Education Act of 1914 entirely changes the relations which have hitherto existed between the Board and its Inspectors; but whatever benefits to administration or efficiency may be expected to accrue from the new order of things, we feel the keenest regret at the severance of an official connection which has given us such ample opportunities of appreciating the generous consideration and courtesy which have always been such characteristic features of the Board's dealings with its officers.

We have, &c.,

T. R. FLEMING.

F. H. BAKEWELL.

F. G. A. STUCKEY.

The Chairman, Education Board, Wellington.

#### HAWKE'S BAY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Napier, 12th February, 1915.

The year that has just closed completes an important educational chapter in the history of this country. In the year 1877 the first Education Act was passed, bringing into existence a Department of Education for New Zealand and the establishment of Boards of Education. The first day of the present year began with a Director of Education, the centralization of the inspectorate, the establishment of a Council of Education, and other important educational changes. “The old order changeth, giving place to the new”; and this is required to stay the stagnation that is always the outcome of uniformity.

As far as this education district is concerned the past year has been one of considerable progress in the growth of school attendance, the building and enlargement of schools, and in many improvements that go to make advancing ideals in education generally. The attendance at the Board and other schools visited by us shows a satisfactory increase, and the regularity of attendance at school has resulted in a higher percentage, being 91·3 per cent. of the roll for the whole year, than in any previous year since the Education Board was established. Nor does this high average regularity for the whole district represent what has been reached in quite a number of schools. Thus, Napier West, Napier Main, Port Ahuriri, Mahora South, and Hastings had 96·66, 94, 94·62, 94·27, and 93·25 per cent. of regularity respectively; whilst Ruataniwha, Matamau, Waerengaahika, Pukahu, and Tipapakuku had 95·45, 94·81, 94·7, 94·1, and 93·66 respectively, the former representing town and the latter country schools. These results have been mainly brought about by a growing interest among parents in the progress of their offspring and by the improving school-conditions, whereby children come to take a real pleasure in attendance at school. Credit must also be given to the School Committees and many well-wishers of the children who encourage attending by giving prizes, including gold and silver medals, to those making full attendance.

*Number of Schools.*—Including the small side school at Greenmeadows there were 143 schools in operation at the close of 1914. In addition to these, ten Roman Catholic and ten other private institutions were inspected. Thus the total number of schools that were visited by us during the year was 163. The Board schools had an enrolment of 12,570, which represents slightly below ninety for each school on the average; the Roman Catholic schools had an enrolment of 1,124 pupils, or an average for each of the ten schools of over 112 pupils; and the remaining ten schools had an attendance of 439, or slightly below forty-four pupils for each. The increase of pupils for 1914 was 728 in the Board schools and 340 in the private. Much of the increase in the latter schools is due to the inclusion of schools not previously visited by us, such as Iona