

noticeable, and this rather than any formal test will in future be taken as a criterion in assessing the quality of the work. Too much attention cannot be given by the teacher to the close supervision of all written work. The weaknesses most evident are undoubtedly due to want of care by the pupil, so that the continued repetition of badly formed letters mars the legibility and general appearance of the writing.

*Arithmetic.*—In this subject the results of the year show a falling-off in efficiency of 5 per cent. of the schools of the district, undoubtedly largely attributable to the unfavourable working-conditions already referred to. In most of the schools we find the teaching of the subject carried out in a satisfactory manner. In some, however, the practical side of the subject should be more fully dealt with, so that the pupil may the more readily solve such everyday problems as present themselves to the tradesman or to the business man. Mental arithmetic was not a uniformly strong branch of the subject, and we would once again suggest that daily practice be given in mental work that will tend to ensure speed and accuracy in dealing with written problems. In this connection we very often found S6 pupils unable to apply short methods to cases that required ordinary intelligence. Clearness of method and care in setting out the necessary details of the work should be aimed at in all classes. In the junior and preparatory divisions concrete methods are largely utilized, and the subject is generally made as interesting as possible to the younger children. With such methods regular and thorough memorization of results is most essential, or otherwise, as the pupil advances in the subject he will continually find it necessary to employ the concrete illustrations adopted in the earlier stages.

*Drawing.*—This subject on the whole reached a satisfactory standard. Nowhere has greater improvement taken place than in the lower classes, where blackboard drawing has been very generally adopted. Instrumental drawing does not appear to receive as much attention as other branches of the subject. The selection of objects for object-drawing is occasionally made with little judgment or regard for the capacities of the pupils. The syllabus suggests appropriate selections for each division of the school.

*Other Subjects.*—Other subjects, too, we found had suffered somewhat in fullness and thoroughness of treatment, the limited time at the teacher's disposal usually inducing him to concentrate his energies upon those only which he considered to be essential. Temperance instruction, a subject brought prominently into notice by a circular memorandum from the Minister of Education, has received very varied treatment. It has rarely been treated scientifically, but a really scientific treatment is almost impossible in an ordinary public school, and would be unintelligible to the ordinary school pupil. With the help of temperance charts and diagrams, however, some useful temperance instruction has been given in many schools, especially in connection with health lessons, and the results have been frequently tested by us. The following have been recognized as classes for manual instruction: Elementary agriculture, 44 classes; dairy-work, 10; physiology and first aid, 11; swimming, 18; elementary physical measurements, 2; metal-work, 12; woodwork, 12; cookery, 21. The last three subjects have been usually taught by special teachers at one or other of the four centres, Nelson, Wakefield, Westport, and Reefton. Unfortunately, through the Board's inability to provide a separate teacher of cooking for the small centre, Reefton was not opened this year, and the number of classes in woodwork and cookery is reduced accordingly. In all, sixty-nine schools, or 57·5 per cent., have taken some form of manual instruction.

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

*Maori Children.*—[See E.-3, Report on Education of Maori Children.]

*School Buildings.*—The condition of the school buildings varies considerably in different parts of the district. To a very great extent their state depends upon the interest displayed in the school by the local authority. In many rural districts we find much indifference and neglect of buildings on the part of Committees. The system by which repairs and painting are effected only after application by the Committee is unmethodical, and fails to keep the buildings in a sound state of repair and preservation. Throughout the district are many buildings of an old type that cannot in the present day be regarded as educationally suitable. Many of these will soon have to be rebuilt. On the West Coast, on account of the severe weather-conditions, the buildings fall more quickly into disrepair. Painting is required in many cases, and the postponement of it for the present on account of the increased expense is a policy that must eventually prove costly to the Board. During the past few years the seating-accommodation has been greatly improved. The old-fashioned long desks have been discarded, and most of the schools are now equipped with modern dual desks. In many instances sweeping, dusting, and cleaning of rooms might be much better carried out. Some schools appear to be always in want of a thorough cleaning. Both from an educational and a health standpoint absolute cleanliness is an essential. Regular attention to out-offices is marked by much slackness on the part of some Committees. Difficulty in obtaining the necessary labour is one of the chief drawbacks. Where a regular sewage system exists no difficulty prevails, but to establish a satisfactory and sanitary system in most of the rural schools by the generally adopted methods requires the utmost vigilance and attention on the part of those in charge of school buildings. The latest form of outside office introduced by the Board seems likely in suitable localities to do away with many existing difficulties. This is on a modified septic-tank system, and though of too great expense for smaller localities is economical and effective in the larger country schools where the subsoil is of a sufficiently porous nature.

*Physical Instruction and Medical Inspection.*—Visits of physical instructors and of Medical Inspectors were paid to the larger schools of the district. They operated partly from Canterbury as well as from Wellington, to which latter this district has for this purpose been attached. The three main centres and larger schools in the neighbourhood were also visited by the medical officer and instructor conjointly for the purpose of establishing physical corrective classes. Children whose physical defects were such as to warrant special treatment were selected by the doctor, and a course of physical exercises adapted to their special needs was prescribed for them, and the