

At the conclusion of the junior-high-school course pupils desiring to proceed further will, of course, enter a senior high school or technical high school. The chief point of the proposed change is that the school course will be divided into 6-3-3 year periods, instead of 8-2 or 8-4 year periods as at present, and pupils leaving after nine years' schooling will have received a much more useful, well-balanced, and complete course than is possible under the present arrangement.

CURRICULUM OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.

Although there are at present no departmental regulations directly governing the curriculum of secondary schools, the regulations defining the subjects of instruction to be taught to free-place holders and the prescribed syllabuses of the various public examinations to a large extent control the character of the courses of work undertaken. Instruction must be provided for junior-free-place holders in English, history and civics, arithmetic, mathematics, a branch of science, and in two additional subjects which may be one or two foreign languages, science subjects, or some such subject as commercial work, woodwork, drawing, &c. The study of home science is compulsory for every girl holding a junior free place.

The Department's Inspectors of Secondary Schools visit all secondary schools, inspecting the work, conferring with the teachers on teaching matters, and discussing with the Principals details of organization and method. Written and oral tests are also given to second-year pupils in English, arithmetic, and usually in other subjects up to the standard of the Intermediate Examination, and Principals' recommendations for the award of senior free places and of the various leaving-certificates are dealt with. General improvement in the quality of the teaching is reported, teachers, on the whole, displaying a growing interest in educational reform and in modern methods of instruction.

In the main the courses provided at secondary schools are of an academic character, but the necessity of providing for pupils not intending to take up a scholastic or professional career is being increasingly realized. Short courses are now provided in most schools, suitable for pupils remaining only one or two years, from which the study of foreign languages and mathematics is generally excluded; commercial courses are also followed by a large number of pupils, and instruction in such subjects as agriculture, needlework, and cookery is fairly general. Of the total number of pupils only 55 per cent. of the boys and 33 per cent. of the girls now take Latin, while 90 per cent. of the boys and 93 per cent. of the girls take French; about 1,500 boys and 1,000 girls take commercial subjects, 750 boys take agriculture, and only 688 girls now study botany, its place having been taken by home science.

The course provided in the secondary departments of district high schools is intended to be of a less academic nature than that of the secondary schools, and to have a bearing more or less upon rural pursuits. The result is that 65 per cent. of the boys and 22 per cent. of the girls study agricultural science, and 28 per cent. of the boys and 18 per cent. of the girls learn dairy-work. Subjects connected with home life are also largely taken by the girls. Only 29 per cent. of the pupils learn Latin. A number of the pupils, however, in these schools prefer to follow the usual scholastic course, with the result that the teachers in small schools have a difficult task in teaching a wide range of subjects to a limited number of pupils. The present proposals for reorganizing the post-primary system will eliminate this special difficulty of the district high school as it is now constituted.

DESTINATION OF PUPILS LEAVING THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

In close connection with the suitability of the courses provided at secondary schools is the destination of the pupils after leaving. From returns received concerning 2,200 pupils who left the ordinary secondary schools at the end of the year 1921 it appears that 7 per cent. continued their education at the University, 13 per cent. went to other schools or classes for commercial or other training, and 16 per cent. entered the teaching service. Thirty-six per cent. of the girls took up duties at home, and 24 per cent. of the boys proceeded to farming occupations. The principal avocations followed by the remainder were: clerical work in commercial