

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 houses, &c., 12 per cent.; Government services, 2.5 per cent.; shops, 4 per cent.; engineering and similar trades, 2 per cent.; other trades, 2 per cent.; and professions such as architects, surveyors, &c., 3 per cent.

HOSTELS FOR PUPILS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

(Table K6.)

The policy of accommodating country pupils in hostels attached to the secondary schools is favoured by the Department, and, as far as possible, financial assistance is being given for the erection of hostels. Unfortunately, the enforced restriction of all building operations has led to the postponement of the erection of a few urgently needed hostels. The majority of schools now have hostels connected with them, the buildings as a rule being the property of the Boards, but in a few cases being rented. In nearly every instance the hostels are now controlled by the Board of Governors, and in many cases they are a source of revenue. There were 1,223 boys and 407 girls of the secondary departments and 264 lower department pupils accommodated in school hostels in 1921. Of the boys, 370 were at Christ's College, Christchurch, and the Wanganui Collegiate School. In addition to these numbers, 98 pupils were boarding at establishments approved by the Principals, and 562 were boarding privately. For these last-named, and also for the large number of children prevented from attending school owing to the boarding difficulty, or forced to make long railway journeys daily, additional accommodation where there is dependable supervision and desirable environment is still needed.

FREE SECONDARY EDUCATION.

(Table K4.)

Free secondary education is provided on an extensive scale, junior and senior free places being tenable at secondary schools, district high schools, technical high schools, and other technical schools.

Generally speaking, junior free places are tenable for two years, with a possible extension in certain cases to three years. In the case of their being held at district high schools they are tenable to the age of seventeen. The means of qualification are—

- (1.) For entrance to secondary schools and district high schools—
 - (a) Special examinations for Junior National Scholarships, (b) the certificate of proficiency.