

girls now take Latin, while over 80 per cent. of the pupils learn French. Commercial subjects were taken in 1922 by one thousand seven hundred boys and one thousand girls, agriculture by over five hundred boys, and dairy science by two hundred boys.

In the district high schools the courses are still more of a nature directly bearing upon the vocations shortly to be followed by the pupils, many of the schools providing a full rural course of instruction. The result is that such a subject as Latin is taken by only 25 per cent. of the pupils, while agricultural science is taken by 71 per cent. of the boys and 23 per cent. of the girls, woodwork and metal work by 62 per cent. of the boys, and needlework and cookery by 64 per cent. of the girls. Some pupils in these schools prefer to take the ordinary academic course, with the result that the burden laid upon the teachers, who number only one or two in most of the schools, is very great. The Dalton plan is being practised successfully in a number of these schools, and Inspectors report that in spite of frequent changes in the staff and often insufficient and improvised accommodation the standard of work is gradually rising.

At present an investigation is being made by the Department into the whole question of the secondary-school curriculum.

The Department has recently issued a draft list of text-books approved for use in secondary schools, district high schools, and the general courses in technical high schools. In compiling the list the Department was influenced by the cost of the books, their suitability for various grades and types of pupils, the present very general use of certain books, and the various methods of teaching employed.

#### LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

An investigation made into the number of holidays given in secondary and technical high schools during the year revealed considerable variation in the practice of the different schools. The longest school year was one of 392 half-days, and the shortest one of 351 half-days, or 35 school weeks. A working-year of this length is considered much too short, and the opinion is expressed that 390 half-days, or 38 full school weeks, is the minimum length of school year desirable in schools of this type. It is proposed to take steps in the direction of securing some measure of uniformity in this respect.

#### DESTINATION OF PUPILS LEAVING THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

From returns received concerning pupils leaving the secondary schools at the end of 1922, it appears that 6 per cent. of the number went on to the University, 15 per cent. entered the teaching profession, and 10 per cent. entered other schools or classes for clerical training. Farming was taken up by 23 per cent. of the boys and home duties by 37 per cent. of the girls. Other avocations entered upon were: Government offices, 7 per cent. of the boys; clerical work in insurance offices, agencies, &c., 13 per cent. (boys and girls); engineering and allied trades, 4 per cent. (boys); other trades, 4 per cent. of the boys; and such professions as surveying, law, architecture, &c., by 6 per cent. of the boys; warehouses and shops each 2 per cent. of the boys.

From similar returns supplied by technical high schools rather contrasting figures are obtained. In this case only 1 per cent. went on to the University, 3 per cent. took up teaching, and 5 per cent. went on to other schools or classes. On the other hand, 15 per cent. of the boys took up engineering and allied trades, 10 per cent. took up other trades, 11 per cent. went into shops, and 3 per cent. into factories. Farming was taken up by 13 per cent. of the boys and home duties by 43 per cent. of the girls. Commercial work was followed by 13 per cent. of the boys and 25 per cent. of the girls, and professions such as surveying, law, &c., were entered upon by 2 per cent. of the boys.

#### HOSTELS FOR PUPILS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

(Table K6 in E.-6.)

The advantages of having hostels attached to the secondary schools for the accommodation of country pupils are fully realized, and financial assistance is being given as far as possible by the Government for the erection of hostel buildings.