

### PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION.

In the schools which were inspected during October and the early part of November, Standard VI was examined during the visit, but where it was deemed necessary the head teachers were further consulted concerning the progress of such pupils. From the other schools the Standard VI pupils were met by the Inspector at twenty-nine centres. In every case an Inspector personally supervised the examination. The work on proficiency day was reduced in respect of certain subjects according as notes taken during the second visit and recording the progress of individual pupils rendered desirable.

### ORGANIZATION.

During the year some progress has been made in reduction of large classes, but in two of the larger schools improvement waits on provision of suitable accommodation. In one school, experiment with the Dalton plan has been continued in Standard VI with satisfactory results. A number of instances have been noted in which the classification of the pupils has been made to depend too greatly on success or deficiency in one or two subjects.

### HOSPITAL SCHOOL.

This school is operating with very reasonable success. An important requirement in the teacher is a rich endowment of sympathy, as the changing personnel makes heavy calls on her enthusiasm. It is possible that assistance might be extended with profit to some of the older patients, especially to youths who are bedridden for long periods. If this extension of activities be allowed the school should function for the full day.

### DENTAL CLINIC.

The nurses are doing excellent work. The young people that resort to them appear to emerge very well satisfied from their experience. There is every evidence that many of the ills which beset the young are avoided, and a higher standard of general health is assured by this early care of the teeth.

### DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.

The rural course is followed during the first two years, and is succeeded by the Matriculation course. Conditions are not very satisfactory at either school. At Riverton two teachers have to use a single room, or one may withdraw a class to an assembly-hall, which is very cold in winter. The accommodation for science is limited. The secondary classes there seem well established, so better provision for this part of the work would be appreciated. Notwithstanding these difficulties the pupils acquitted themselves very well.

At Wyndham the secondary division, which was recently assembled, is in the tentative stage. No provision is made for science, and neither building nor ground is suitable for lengthy occupation.

### BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

Some school interiors are dingy and would be greatly improved if painted in attractive tints. Wall blackboards are gradually displacing the cumbersome easel blackboards, which still, however, in certain schools take up too much of the floor-space. Better blackboard accommodation is possible when cupboards are recessed. In several schools the cloak-rooms or out-offices are very inferior. By way of contrast, the general appointments at Gore are a pleasure to contemplate.

Grounds are generally sufficient in area. The garden forms a pleasing feature. In various localities the staff and Committees have during 1924 raised and spent large sums in ground-improvement. The instructor in agriculture displays much interest in planning with the teachers an improved environment. Something has already been done with the inauguration of forestry plots, and we look forward to a considerable extension of this work during the current year.

### PHYSICAL INSTRUCTION.

In physical instruction a commendable standard is maintained. Organized games are much practised. At the annual sports the representatives of many schools meet in friendly rivalry and show very gratifying exhibitions of skill in performance of the various exercises. These gatherings inform public opinion on desirable objectives. The enthusiasm of the teachers is very praiseworthy.

### SCHOOL HYGIENE.

We still feel that recreational and relaxational exercises are not sufficiently given, but can notice a somewhat better realization generally of the dictates of school hygiene. There is, however, much room for systematic study and application of the principles of the hygiene of instruction. A standard book should be in every teacher's hands. We recommend Drummond's "School Hygiene."

### TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

Those entering into the profession as pupil-teachers or probationers are for the most part of fine type. At the beginning of 1925 there were 120 applicants for twenty-two positions. All the successful applicants were matriculated. Such entrants might normally be expected to attain the full D certificate at the close of a two-year period of training. Where this success is not attained those responsible for the instruction should give the matter diligent heed. The classes in drawing, elementary science, and agriculture arranged at the Technical High School, Invercargill, and in Gore, were continued for a third term during 1924. They operated very satisfactorily—the staff being highly