

scholastic ability, with the result that those in the mathematics and French classes profit more by the teaching and make more rapid progress than formerly. The rural course continues to be taken in all country district high schools, these being provided with well-equipped laboratories and experimental plots to provide means for that practical work which should, and does, form the backbone of the course.

With respect to the teaching of science and commercial subjects, secondary departments are handicapped by small staffs, necessarily limited by small roll numbers. This difficulty, together with that of giving continuity of instruction, is being met to a limited extent in some schools by specialized teaching from Form I up, teachers of all forms being utilized as their special abilities suggest. Such a plan might with advantage be more fully applied in the anticipation of the junior-high-school organization. Most of the head teachers and assistants take a broad view of their responsibilities, and are giving to their pupils much more than a mere scholastic training. It is perhaps true that external examinations dominate the policy and teaching on the academic side of these institutions, but, in spite of these demands, the scholars are obtaining a grounding in social service and in elementary civic responsibility. In addition, the refinements of art and music are not altogether neglected.

Probationers.

The probationers are of a good type, well equipped educationally, physically, and personally. Enthusiasm is in no degree lacking, studies are assiduously pursued, and duties are conscientiously carried out.

Probationary Assistants.

The consensus of opinion is that there has been a steady improvement in the professional equipment of the trainees. Few are the cases where enthusiasm is wanting. A good knowledge of methods of teaching gives these beginners confidence in managing a class for the first time, and saves them from reverting to practices in teaching which are relics of the past. Moreover, they have been the means of disseminating fresh ideas, which have been welcomed by the older members of the staff. The influence of the teachers with special training—that is, those who have had three years' training—is gradually beginning to make itself felt. Headmasters of schools in which they have been placed in most cases appreciate their services and give them ample scope. In some cases weakness in general class teaching and management have militated against success with the special subjects. This emphasizes the necessity for the exercise of the greatest vigilance and care in the selection of students for a third year of training, and they should not be allowed to go out to schools with the title "specialist" unless they have given evidence of ability to apply their special knowledge in such a manner as to impress their individuality upon the classes entrusted to them.

Music.

Training Colleges.—Good work is being done in all the colleges, and the students are being trained to use the official "Scheme of School Music" and songs of the best quality. At Auckland a class of thirty women took special infant-work, and sixty took eurhythmics. The Lecturer in Music has given three special lectures to three hundred teachers on "The Dominion Song-book," which was specially compiled for the schools, and, as a result, hundreds of copies have been purchased by the schools. Since 1928 ten third-year music specialists have been trained, of whom nine are in temporary or permanent appointments and are doing excellent work. There are four third-year music specialists for 1931. At Wellington much attention is being given to practical work. The third-year student in music took special piano lessons, and the Lecturer has a piano class on the "Bavin" system for students. There is an orchestra and choir. At Christchurch two third-year students specialized in music. The Lecturer's remarkable scheme of music classes for children has been carried successfully through a second year; about 1,500 children (twice as many as in 1929) were enrolled for the study of piano, stringed and wind instruments, musical appreciation, choral and operetta work. A four days' festival was held in October, at which a large orchestra performed, in addition to choral, operatic, and other items. At Dunedin much practical work is being done. There were four third-year students. The Lecturer has given organ recitals to students, and has also trained a remarkably fine college choir. He has also lectured to high-school children and to parents, and has started a school for group instruction in piano-playing.

"*The Dominion Song-book.*"—The school song-book has been well received and is being increasingly adopted everywhere. It is hoped that this, together with the good songs being circulated through the training-college work, will do much towards raising the standard of choice in school songs and in using them for a definite purpose—e.g., correlation with history and geography, &c.

The Schools.—Music in the schools shows promise, a good sign being the increased interest in it in high schools, and notably among the boys. Orchestras and choirs are growing in numbers, and the teaching of instrumental music has made a good beginning in many places. Much, however, remains to be done before the subject reaches the standard aimed at.

Special Classes.

During the past year the work of the special classes has continued satisfactorily. One unfortunate circumstance is the fact that children ready to leave school are experiencing difficulty in obtaining employment. In Christchurch a scheme of vocational guidance has been worked out in co-operation with the Psychological Department of Canterbury College, and the After-care Committee has rendered assistance in obtaining employment for a number of children.