

17. (1.) The Governor may from time to time make regulations for the formation, equipment, and training of cadet corps in connection with the public schools.

(2.) The Governor may give the control of the aforesaid cadet corps to the Education Boards or the Education Department, in such manner and to such extent as he thinks fit.

(3.) The Governor may also from time to time make regulations for the formation, equipment, and training of cadet corps for youths who are not connected with the public schools, such corps to be under the control of the Defence Department.

Regulations for the organization and inspection of cadet corps in connection with public schools, and dealing with drill in schools generally, are being considered and will be issued shortly.

INSTRUCTION IN SWIMMING.

Out of a vote of £200 taken in 1899 as a "grant to swimming associations for encouragement of swimming," the sum of £100 was intrusted to the Auckland branch of the association for the promotion of the subject in the public schools of the colony; and £300, voted in 1900 "for encouragement of swimming in schools," has been distributed to the Education Boards in proportion to the school-attendance of the several districts, to be used by the Boards in providing pupils of public schools with instruction in swimming, or giving them facilities or inducements for learning or practising the art. The Department has also obtained from Home, and distributed to Education Boards for the use of teachers, a supply of the Handbook of Instruction of the Life-saving Society of England; and has applied for and intends to publish information respecting the methods of the London Schools Swimming Association, and other similar organizations.

The regulations under the Manual and Technical Instruction Act now provide for this subject by allowing subsidy on school classes in swimming and life-saving methods.

RAILWAY PASSES FOR PUPILS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

The total amount paid under this head to the Railway Department in 1900 was £3,333, of which £1,117 was for fares of children attending private schools.

INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS AND STANDARDS OF EXAMINATION.

The new regulations for the inspection and examination of schools, which were gazetted on the 16th December, 1899, and came into operation on the 1st January, 1900, seem to have fulfilled their purpose: that of forming a transition stage in the revision of the methods under which the public schools have been organized, inspected, and examined in the past. On the whole, it may be said that Inspectors and teachers have evidently combined to work them loyally in such a manner as to produce the best results in the several districts; and the friendly criticism to which they have been subjected appears to have evolved much clearer ideas as to the lines along which further reforms should move, and to have called forth a greater degree of unanimity in reference thereto than could have been expected on so debatable a subject. Inspectors of schools, head teachers, and other experts are now practically agreed that the next step in advance should be the abolition of the individual Standard pass, except in Standard VI., and that at the same time there should be a modification and a rearrangement of the syllabus of instruction in such a way as (1) to reduce the range of requirements in small schools, and (2) to facilitate the introduction or extension of hand and eye training and the more practical treatment of all the subjects in the school course.

The freedom of classification granted to head teachers by the existing regulations seems in general to have been used with discretion—perhaps even in some cases with an amount of caution that probably owes its origin to the influence of the continuance of the Standard pass. At all events, the time appears to have come for further progress, and it is hoped that before long it may be possible to issue new regulations embodying the ideas expressed above.