

Schemes of Work.—The schemes of work submitted did not always meet with approval; while in many schools, notably the larger ones, suitable schemes were fully set out, in others neither the correlation of subject with subject, nor the grouping of class with class, nor the course selected for treatment was satisfactorily described. Some of the subjects, moreover, were hardly mentioned at all—drawing, for instance, being frequently omitted. In setting out schemes of instruction in the scheme-book, it would be better in all cases that the entire course in each subject should appear in the same portion of the book: *i.e.*, in reading, the complete school course (from Class P to Standard VII) should be set down as a whole, and should not be interspersed with portions of schemes of work in other subjects. This plan, which has already been adopted in some schools, shows at once the complete scheme it is proposed to follow in any given subject, and more readily enables an estimate to be formed of the general suitability of the course.

Periodical Examinations.—It is found necessary again to draw attention to the need for compliance with the terms of clause 5 of the Regulations for the Inspection and Examination of Schools, and more particularly with that portion of the clause having reference to the questions set at the periodical examinations and the pupils' answers thereto. It is of utmost importance that work done by pupils at these periodical tests should be carefully marked and kept in the school until after the Inspector's visit. In several cases we have been unable to find any satisfactory evidence that an adequate amount of work has been covered, or that adequate tests had been applied.

Observation Schools.—In this district, as in other educational districts throughout the Dominion, there are unfortunately a considerable number of uncertificated teachers, some of whom are practically without experience, and hence are incapable of discharging efficiently the important duties of their profession. Many of them are without knowledge of the standard of attainment and effort reached by the best schools, and so are unable to realize their own limitations. Most of them, moreover, are so far removed from centres where the more efficient schools are in operation that it would be both costly and inconvenient to require them to make use of such schools for purposes of observation. It is from a visit to the small sole-charge school that they would derive most benefit; but this type of school, owing to its isolation and the small salary it carries, does not, as a rule, attract the kind of teacher likely to act as a model and an inspiration to the inexperienced. A few small schools scattered about the district in convenient centres and staffed by specially selected and highly efficient teachers would afford the facilities required. To these "observation schools" the most promising amongst the inexperienced teachers could from time to time be sent, much to the advantage of themselves and the community amongst whom they are to work. The teachers in charge would require to be specially efficient, so that their schools and methods might be regarded as models, and any detriment to the pupils' progress, caused by the presence of visiting teachers, minimized. To secure the type of teacher needed for this work it would be necessary to provide salaries considerably higher than present scale conditions allow. Half a dozen such schools in suitable localities would be of very great assistance to the authorities here in their efforts to improve the status and efficiency of inexperienced teachers.

Organized Activities.—A good deal of attention has of late been directed to the importance of organized games as a factor of school life, and it is gratifying to know that a large body of our teachers have come to recognize the true educative significance of these activities in so far as they affect the school community. There is no better work in the field of education than the inculcation of a love of wholesome outdoor games. By such means habits of obedience and manliness, of unselfishness and co-operation, of fortitude and endurance, and many other desirable qualities are encouraged and strengthened. To quote from the English Code: "Self-reliance, decision, and a power to obey as well as to command will be cultivated by means of organized games as freely as they can be cultivated in the schoolroom; and it seems clear that unless the school in some way recognizes this type of work it does not perform to the highest possible degree its full duty to the children, not merely in respect to their physical training, but in regard to the equally important aim of the development of that generous and cheerful temper which is so serviceable in after-life." Closely connected with this matter—indeed, forming part of it—is the question of swimming and life-saving. All people will agree that every boy and girl should know how to swim. The exercise itself is pleasant, invigorating, and healthy, and the ability to swim frequently means the difference between life and death. And yet a considerable number of boys and girls are yearly passing through our schools without having been taught this most necessary accomplishment. Instruction both in swimming and in life-saving should be given to pupils in all schools within reach of bathing facilities, and it is to be hoped that, with the improved bathing-accommodation already to some extent provided by the city, greater attention may be given to this matter. The contention that there is no time to teach swimming is an idle one. If it be recognized as an essential subject of instruction time must be found for it, and some other subject or subjects must receive somewhat less attention during that period of the year when swimming-lessons are given. During the course of their visits Inspectors will be prepared to consider such proposals on the part of teachers as will enable instruction in swimming and life-saving to be included in the schemes of work submitted.

Rural Course in District High Schools.—The rural course has been in operation in some of our district high schools during the past year, but, owing to a variety of causes, can hardly yet be considered as firmly established, owing mainly to the small salaries offered. The difficulty of obtaining suitable teachers has been considerable; while, in addition, several of the centres are still unprovided with such facilities for manual training as the course demands. This is much to be regretted, in view of the importance of the rural course, and we look forward to the time when the difficulties in the way of extending more widely the benefits to be derived from this form of instruction may be removed. At present the rural course is in operation only in the Cambridge, Waihi, Pukekohe, and Paeroa District High Schools.