already been accomplished in a North Island boys' school and in one southern girls' school. A limited number of selected students have been associated with the staffs of these schools and placed, as a rule, under the direct supervision of skilled heads of departments. The success of the scheme is evident from the expressions of appreciation received from the students. An alternative solution lies in the establishment of a training college for secondary-school teachers; but with our scattered population and widely distributed University colleges this at present appears to be far from practicable. In the meantime, therefore, it appears highly desirable that a scheme similar to the one described above should be adopted in each of the large centres.

The lack of training among secondary-school teachers has become almost a byword. An analysis of the latest classification shows that the percentage of assistants who have passed through a trainingcollege course is 47.6 (men 46.6, women 49.5); if, in addition, there are included the teachers who have spent two or more years as pupil-teachers the percentage rises to 52.2 (men 52.5, women 51.2). Of the seventy-one entrants to the ranks of the secondary teachers last year thirty-five held a trainingcollege certificate. These figures are still far from satisfactory, but they are very much higher than comments in certain quarters have led one to expect. We feel confident that the proportion of trained secondary teachers will steadily rise. An increasingly large number of senior pupils have approached us during our visits for information regarding the possibility of utilizing University bursaries whilst preparing themselves at training colleges for secondary-school work; this in itself is a reassuring feature.

There is an increasing tendency to take advantage of the regulations providing for the appointment of heads of departments; as many as seven schools (five boys', one girls', and one mixed) had the system in operation last year, compared with four in the preceding one. Nine schools, however, which were entitled to appoint such heads did not avail themselves of the opportunity; in most of them it was found impossible to give any member of the staff sufficient free time to enable him to carry out the duties prescribed by the regulations. Where heads of departments have been appointed, and more especially in the boys' schools, much excellent work has been accomplished by them in training young and inexperienced teachers and in improving the general standard of the work done in their own subjects. It need hardly be pointed out, however, that the success of the system depends to a very large extent indeed upon the personality of the individuals appointed as heads; instances have not been found wanting where a lack of sympathy and tact has undoubtedly created friction and bitterness among members of a staff.

Experiments with the Dalton plan, usually on a small scale, were persevered with in several schools, both departmental and private, during the past year. In one large boys' school the plan, after being in operation in the higher forms for nearly a year, was definitely abandoned at the close of the first term; other schools were also led to give up the scheme for various reasons, such as the lack of enthusiasm among some of the class-teachers, the deficiency in library and "laboratory" equipment, or the apathy of the pupils themselves. One girls' school, however, continued with the plan throughout the year, and apparently with quite satisfactory results in most subjects. It would appear that our schools must wait until their library equipment is on a much more generous scale than at present if experiments with the plan are to meet with a convincing measure of success. In the meantime we feel certain that the experiments already made have not been fruitless, and that some of the spirit underlying the plan will survive in the schools that have given it a trial. We do not propose to discuss in this report either the curricula or the teaching methods followed

We do not propose to discuss in this report either the curricula or the teaching methods followed in the various schools, as these have been frequently and adequately dealt with in inspection reports. In connection with the former topic, however, we must draw attention to the continued unpopularity of the agricultural course in our schools. In several instances not only have special laboratories been erected and equipped for the teaching of dairy science and agriculture, but specially trained instructors have also been appointed as teachers. It is very disappointing to these men and to the school authorities to find the percentage of agricultural pupils dwindling year by year. It is more than probable that the pronounced agricultural depression has been a very large contributing factor in late years to the unsatisfactory situation described above. Whether it is the only one remains to be seen in the current year, now that much better prospects appear to be in view for the farming community.

One marked result of the grading scheme has been to induce a fairly large number of teachers to sit for higher degrees than those they possessed when they entered the profession. In our opinion, however, it is to be very much regretted that so many of these have elected to take honours in economics, philosophy, or history—subjects which as a rule do not fit a teacher to take any advanced class in a secondary school. There is, and always will be, a demand for teachers with special qualifications in languages, in mathematics, or in the sciences, and it is a pity that so many young teachers are neglecting these subjects for those which, from the point of view of the secondary school at least, are much less important. There is a strong feeling in some quarters that the academic qualifications for the A grade should be so amended as to restrict them to honours in specified subjects such as science, languages, or mathematics. There is, in our opinion, very much to be said in support of such a proposal.

The tone of the secondary schools continues to be excellent; discipline, as a rule, appears to be easily maintained without any show of force. Teachers continue to show undoubted interest in their work, and in general are eager to discuss educational methods or reforms and to adopt those that appeal to them. It is only natural that some of them have yet much to learn before they are highly efficient, but the zeal and the industry displayed by the vast majority of them and their loyalty to the best traditions of the service are deserving of high praise.

We have, &c., E. J. PARR,

The Director of Education.

E. J. PARR, H. P. KIDSON, Inspectors of Secondary Schools.