

would willingly continue the almost universal practice of retaining Forms I and II as part of an ordinary primary school where as a rule each of these Forms has the benefit of only one teacher who cannot possibly be expected to be highly efficient in all subjects. Local opposition to the transfer of Forms I and II to such schools is often based on grounds that are not strictly educational: loss of capitation consequent on a reduction in roll number is feared, the prestige of the contributing school will, it is felt, be lowered, while it is sometimes asserted that equally good work could be done in an ordinary school if it were similarly staffed and equipped. As regards the last point, it is not reasonable or possible to provide three, four, or five sets of specialist staffs and specialist equipment where one would suffice. These young persons, entering on adolescence, enjoy their life in a school where the absence of infant and lower standard classes affords the fullest opportunity for the most suitable form of discipline and control. No community with these schools ever asks for a reversion to the older order. The contributing schools themselves, having lost their senior classes, find that the highest remaining class, S. IV, develop qualities of leadership and responsibility hitherto unsuspected. Throughout English-speaking countries this change in the school system is rapidly developing, and in no place more rapidly than in England. Our intermediate system coincides with that of England in so far as it terminates the primary stage at eleven years; but it differs inasmuch as while in New Zealand *all* the eleven-plus pupils enter the intermediate schools before passing to the post-primary stage, in England up to approximately 25 per cent. of the academically brightest are at the age of eleven diverted to central and secondary schools for a four- or six-year course leading to commerce and the professions, the remainder being drafted into "senior" schools for a course up to the age of fourteen.

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.

The District High Schools show a steady advance in both efficiency of work and diversification of curriculum. The institution of the School Certificate has freed them from the restrictive influence of the University Entrance Examination, though, of course, many parents still insist on their children taking the latter course. Music, art, and craftwork courses are gradually developing. Unfortunately many of these post-primary departments are so small as to have only one or two teachers, who naturally cannot be expected to have all the necessary gifts. The time has come to consider the advisability of merging Forms I and II of the primary department of the school with the secondary department, and perhaps the Forms I and II of neighbouring schools also. Only thus can the advantages of a staff with diversified gifts be obtained for the centres of scholarship and culture in rural areas. The possibilities of the Correspondence School providing for some of these pupils courses which a small district high school staff is unable to supply is also being explored.

CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

The Correspondence School continues to increase its enrolment, which at the end of the year comprised 1,444 primary and 519 post-primary pupils. It provides a most useful service for all children living in isolated localities and for post-primary pupils not within convenient reach of post-primary schools. Among the pupils are 250 suffering from a degree of physical disability which precludes their attendance at any ordinary school. Sickness in this school does not involve any break in instruction, since every pupil's education is individual. Six hundred and fifty girls are learning needlecraft in a department specially organized for this purpose.

Several post-primary pupils living near primary schools enrol in these schools and have assignments of work sent to them. These they work under the supervision of the head teacher, who also corrects the work. Experience has shown that this is not a very satisfactory procedure; the routine of a small school distracts the student's attention, and the teacher himself seldom can give the intimate supervision and expert advice which the specialist staff of the Correspondence School can give. There is a temptation for small schools to enrol such pupils in order to maintain or raise the grade of the school, but such enrolment is apt to be at the expense of the pupils. A change of teachers in the school may mean that the pupil cannot receive from the second teacher the assistance the first was able and willing to give. The pupils are then faced with the alternative of leaving school or of beginning afresh in the Correspondence School.

At the end of the year 59 pupils completed their primary course, 10 passed the School Certificate Examination, 8 University Entrance, while 4 gained higher leaving certificates, and 5 partial passes in the Training College Entrance Examination.

EXAMINATIONS.

During recent years the examination system has been much discussed. It is appropriate here to say that during the eight years of the primary course only one external official examination generally known as the Proficiency Examination is held. This examination is taken by pupils in Form II, as Standard VI is now called. In addition to this examination the head teacher holds and records the results of two half-yearly examinations; this enables him to keep more intimately in touch with his school and assists him materially in determining promotions at the end of the year. The analogy which is sometimes made between such