

370
DASH
L. M. J. E. E.

PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION

IN DENMARK.
N4

1. Administration.

The Danish primary school is a municipal school in receipt of State grants.

The supreme education authority is, in the case of the provincial towns, the town council and, as far as the rural areas are concerned, the parish council.

The supervision of the management of the schools of a local authority area may be carried out either by an education committee for the whole area or by an education committee in co-operation with a special parents' board of the individual school.

It is for the local council to decide how the educational system in the area shall be organised. A parents' board, however, may be set up for the individual school under specified rules, where requested by the parents concerned.

The members of the education committee are appointed by the town council, who shall secure that the parents from the different school districts are represented on the education committee.

The number of members shall be twice the number of schools increased by one, subject to a minimum of five and a maximum of 15.

Having regard to the size of the school, the local council decides whether the parents' board shall have three or five members. One of the members is nominated by the education committee; the other members are elected by the parents.

The education committee and the parents' board supervise the work of the schools and are responsible for seeing that the children of compulsory school age in the area receive adequate instruction.

The education committee considers such questions as internal

examinations and report books. Further, the committee is consulted as to the teaching media to be used by the schools. As to financial questions, however, the committee shall make recommendation to the local council on the subject, and the latter shall then decide whether a grant may be made for the purpose in question.

The education committee shall approve the division of work between the teachers, i.e. the weekly time-table.

Where in the opinion of the school a child is not to be promoted at the end of the school year, the final decision rests with the education committee.

The education committee makes recommendation for appointment of teachers in the case of vacancies. Further, it takes part in negotiations on the timing of preparation for the confirmation. It also considers whether children who have started on a school term after school-leaving age and want to leave school during the course of the school year may be allowed to do so.

On the whole, the education committee is entitled to offer an opinion on all matters relating to the schools in the area and is required to make a statement on all questions submitted to it by the local council or any higher authority.

The education committee attends to matters affecting all schools in the municipality. Where a parents' board exists, a number of duties have been assigned to that board, which, however, may act only on behalf of the individual school.

The day-to-day administration of educational matters in a local authority area is entrusted to an educationalist; at the large schools he is called principal, at the small schools head teacher.

While it is the business of the principal to look after the activities of the school and inspect the work carried out by

the teacher, no such authority has been delegated to the head teacher.

The teaching staff of a school form the teachers' council, which is entitled to be heard on all important matters relating to the work of the school.

In the case of a provincial town with several schools, the teachers of all the schools form together a joint teachers' council to consider all general educational problems in the area.

The chairman of the teachers' council and the person in charge of the school attend the meetings of the parents' board, but have no vote.

The chairman of the joint teachers' council attends the meetings of the education committee, and so does generally the person in charge of each school in the town.

In a number of towns, one of the principals as a municipal inspector of schools is appointed secretary to the education committee and assists in the administration of the schools.

As a rule, the large towns have a director of education with educational training, who attends the meetings of the education committee and is responsible for the administration of all educational matters.

The local authorities of the towns are, as far as education is concerned, under the direct control of the Minister of Education, and all educational matters to be decided by the Minister are directly submitted to him by the town council.

As regards the rural areas, the local authorities (gathered in counties) are under the supervision of a regional education authority, which is composed of the chief admini-

strative officer of the county and four members elected by the county council. The ministry exercises in certain respects control over the regional authorities.

A county school adviser is available to the regional education authority. It is his business to assist the local education authority and to give advice and guidance in all educational matters in the county.

The Ministry of Education is the central authority for education and is empowered to make regulations of general validity.

The Government adviser for the folk school and for the Teachers' Training Colleges is educational adviser to the Ministry of Education.

Copenhagen has a special position in the educational system. The members of the local education authority of Copenhagen are appointed by the city council. This education authority has a large measure of independence in the administration of its schools and in many respects has powers similar to those of the Minister of Education in other areas. The education authority is assisted by a Director of Education and three vice-directors.

Each local authority draws up a development plan, which determines the number of school districts and their extent, number of teachers, etc.

The development plans are, as far as the provincial towns are concerned, subjects to approval by the Minister and, as regards the rural areas, by the local education authorities, in pursuance of rules laid down by the Minister.

In addition, an educational plan is drawn up for each school; the plan shall indicate -

- (a) whether or not there shall be co-education;
- (b) the number of weekly periods of the individual classes;
- (c) organisation of school attendance on the various weekdays;
- (d) the curricula;
- (e) the aims to be achieved;
- (f) vacations.

2. Compulsory Education, Registration, etc.

Education is compulsory from the commencement of the school year for children, who at that time have reached the age of seven, until the end of the school year in which they reach the age of fourteen.

A child, who will attain the age of seven during the first six months of the school year, shall be admitted to school at the commencement of the school year, if the person responsible for his school attendance so demands.

School attendance as such, however, is not compulsory in Denmark. One of the provisions of the Education Act runs as follows: "Any child subject to compulsory education who does not otherwise receive an instruction matching what is generally required in the primary school shall be obliged to attend such school." - And it continues: "If a child subject to compulsory education is registered in a recognised private school, or the person responsible for the education of the child makes a written declaration to the education committee (in Copenhagen, the local education authority) to the effect that he himself will see to the education of the child, the latter shall not be required to be registered at a public primary school."

While very few parents themselves attend to the education of their children, there are still quite a number who arrange for their children to attend private schools.

The recognition of private schools is subject to a number of specified conditions. At the commencement of every school year, the head teacher of a recognised private school shall communicate to the education committee (in Copenhagen, the local education authority) a list of all the children attending the school.

In the case of non-attendance of a child, the person responsible for the child's education shall in person or in writing inform the school of the reason for such absence.

Where in the opinion of the education committee parents are guilty of negligence in regard to their children's school attendance, they may be liable to a fine for each child in respect of each day of non-attendance.

The minimum number of periods is subject to fixed rules.

The Education Act provides for the instruction during the seven school years to cover not less than 6,480 periods.

This minimum number of periods shall be distributed over each school year as follows: 720 periods a year from the first to the fourth school year; during the first school year, however, the daily number of periods may be restricted to three, even if the total number of 720 is not reached, subject to the condition that the number of periods during the first four school years is not below 2,880. As regards the fifth, sixth and seventh school years, the annual number of periods shall be at least 1,200, subject to grant of exemptions in the eight and ninth school years, the annual number of periods shall be at least 950; a smaller number of periods may be allowed, however, if the pupils are gainfully occupied in addition to their school work.

The length of a period is normally 50 minutes.

In the first and second forms school must not exceed four hours per day; in the third and fourth forms five hours, and in the fifth to ninth forms six hours per day.

The annual number of days in term ranges in the urban areas between 234 and 240. There are a number of regular holidays, and a few additional days may be granted at the discretion of the school head.

The summer vacation covers the period from about 20th of June till about the 10th of August.

3. Social Services Associated With the School.

The schools perform a variety of functions in addition to education.

By way of example, the schools are required by an Act of 12th July 1946 to provide medical service; school medical officers have thus for quite a number of years been attached to most municipal schools.

The medical officer makes regular examinations of school-children.

Children attending private schools are also subject to examination by a school medical officer under the same rules as apply to the State and municipal schools.

The school medical officer is assisted by school nurses who have to go through a special training prior to their appointment.

In addition, the vast majority of urban schools and quite a number of rural schools have a dental service. There are school dental clinics in some 40 towns, while some 460 local authority areas have agreements with dentists.

4. School Structure.

The concept of primary school is of comparatively recent origin. It appears for the first time in legal language in the beginning of the 19th century. Since that time it is the established name of the municipal school in Denmark.

The external framework of the primary school was last provided for by the Education Act of 20th June 1958.

This legislation was preceded by a prolonged debate on essential fundamental views. The principal problem was the division of the children at the end of the fifth school year which had been maintained till then and the problems associated with such division, as well as the conditions of the village school.

Opinions differed very much as to how the problems should be solved. With a view to obtaining the widest possible agreement, the Education Act was drawn up as a compromise between the conflicting views.

The school being a municipal school, it is in many respects the local authority which shall determine the organisation of local education. In reply to inquiries by local authorities as to the procedure to be followed in a particular field, the Minister will usually answer that there is a choice of several lines of action, and that the choice must be made by the local authorities themselves.

In essential fields, however, efforts have been made to achieve a uniformity of policy and a simplification in relation to the law in force up till now.

The Education Act, 1958, however, makes no distinction between the school systems organised by a village and by a provincial town; and the General Education Act, 1903, governing

the middle and the "Real" schools, will be abolished when children of the present examination middle-school complete their education.

The common foundation of rural and urban schools is provided by sect. 2 of the Act, which says: "The primary school shall consist of a seven or eight-years main school, which may be supplemented by a ninth year; it may also include a "Real" section consisting of three forms. (The latter is a secondary school providing an education with a view to a commercial career or to further studies of a number of institutions (excl. the university)).

It is the achievement of this part of the school education which has been the aim of the village school, because it provides the desired equality with the provincial school, - and rural schools may now develop their own examination system on the same lines as urban schools; this enables the academically minded children to study in their own environment.

It is obvious, however, that there will still be considerable differences between urban and rural schools. In this connection, the size of the population will be the determining factor.

The Education Act, 1958, indicates ways and means of minimising these differences through centralization in order to provide the most appropriate systems.

Though education is compulsory for only seven years, the local education authorities, or the joint education committee, are required to arrange for the continuance of free education of children who wish to stay on at school.

Sect. 3 of the Education Act says: "Each local education authority and each joint education board shall be required to

organise general school instruction for an eighth form, if there is an intake of no less than ten pupils in the district or districts concerned. If there are less than ten pupils, the local education authorities, or the joint education boards, shall be required to meet the cost of instruction and teaching materials for the children resident in the area who follow the general school instruction in a school situated in a different area, or attend a course of at least five months' duration in a youth school or a continuation school."

Further, it is provided that local education authorities who have introduced no ninth form are required to meet the cost of instruction and teaching materials for children resident in the area who attend the ninth form of a school in a different area.

In addition, each local education authority is required to arrange for free instruction in a "Real" section for children resident in the area whose parents so wish, either by setting up a "Real" section on its own account or through the joint education board, or by paying for the teaching materials and instruction of the children in the "Real" section in a neighbouring area. Finally, such arrangements may be made with a private "Real" school. Parents may, however, insist that their children be admitted to a municipal "Real" school.

Ample provision has thus been made for advanced education, though compulsory education (school attendance) does not extend beyond the seventh school year.

In particular, attention should be called to the equality of the two types of advanced education: the eighth and ninth forms on the one hand and the "Real" section on the other. It is anticipated that, as time goes on, local education authorities

and parents will be equally interested in both, and the circular accompanying the Act expressly emphasized the duty of local authorities to inform children and parents of the existing opportunities for education in an eighth and ninth school year.

Both in the case of the eighth and ninth school years and of the "Real" section, it is quite usual for two or more local authorities to combine into a joint education board with a view to providing a joint system of public education.

The Education Act lays down detailed rules for the administration of such joint education boards. The areas of a joint board are, as regards the education of the children, regarded as one area. As many local authority areas have small populations, the idea of combination has been widely adopted.

The centralization provisions of the Education Act, 1958, clearly promote a trend towards a higher degree of equality in the educational field between rural and urban areas.

Each joint education committee may centralize at any level, having regard to what is considered most appropriate in each particular case. The centralization, however, shall include all children at the levels at which centralization takes place. It is no longer legally permissible to separate children, who are eligible for the examination school, from their class and send them to a different school, leaving the other pupils to continue in the old school. On the other hand, pupils from several schools may be assembled at one place within an area or a combination of areas for special education and instruction in wood-handiwork and domestic science and, as far as the seventh form is concerned, for instruction in the second foreign language and in mathematics. As regards the eighth and ninth forms and the "Real" section, a centralization may be made in some particular subjects, or in all of the subjects, as desired.

The trend is towards the seven-years school divided by age-groups (i.e. each form covers one school year). This trend is opposed because many people feel that disappearance of the small schools is a loss to the cultural life of the area.

The Education Act, therefore, provides in a large measure for local self-government. In actual fact, a district school may be closed only if a substantial majority in the area favour such a step.

In order to aid parents of children, who have a long way to travel to school, the Act provides for free transport of pupils of the first three forms in the case of distances of $3\frac{1}{2}$ km or more; for children of the older age-groups, the minimum limit is 5 km.

5. Divided and Undivided School.

The Education Act makes a distinction between undivided and divided schools. The deciding factor is the size of the school.

The general rule is for schools which have less than two classes per age-group from the first to the seventh form to take the children through the school in undivided classes until and including the seventh school year. If the schools have two or more classes per age-group, the usual thing is for them to divide the children into two streams at the expire of the 5th year. All the same, a school of that size may pass over to undivided school, in which case it will be covered by provisions governing experimental work within the primary school.

Under these provisions no teacher can be forced against his will to participate in the operation of an experiment. This ensures practically that no local education authority can enforce

a school system to which the teachers are opposed.

Within each particular school there may still be undivided classes the Education Act providing for the children of the fifth form to continue without division, if the majority of the parents so wish, and the practical conditions permit.

The Education Act provides that the decision where to place the children in a divided school shall be made on the basis of the children's abilities, aptitudes and interests and with due regard to the parents' wishes.

The term "with due regard to the parents' wishes" has been the subject of a great deal of discussion. A departmental circular stresses that the parents' wishes shall be considered subject to any modification resulting from the assessment by the school of the potentialities of the individual child. In other words, the parents cannot require a child to be allocated to a line of education for which the school deem the child unsuited. It is the child's school record that counts, and not the result of the internal tests of one or two days.

The administration of these rules of division implies a close co-operation between school and home. It is an important task for the school to keep the parents informed of their children's potentialities, so that the allocation made at the end of the fifth form will come as no surprise.

The rules governing the division are associated with provisions enabling the children to transfer from one line of education to the other.

As a rule, the line aiming at the eighth and ninth forms, which commences with the sixth form, is called the "a-line", while the one aiming at the "Real" section is called the "b-line". It is, however, possible for children,

who in the course of the sixth or seventh form on the a-line prove capable of following the instruction on the other line, to be transferred to that line. Normally, a transfer from the a-line to the b-line will mean the loss of one year, so that at the end of the 6a or 7a form the child will start in the 6b or 7b form.

In addition, however, it is possible to be transferred from the eighth or ninth form to the "Real" section.

The above rules in connection with the efforts to give more emphasis to the educational aspect in the eighth and ninth forms and to furnish them with a certain competence are likely to make for a decreasing pressure on the examination section.

6. Admission to the "Real" section. Transfer to the Senior Section of the Secondary School.

As to the conditions regarding admission to the "Real" section the Education Act says that the pupil shall be in possession of such maturity and educational attainments as to be likely to follow the instruction in a satisfactory way and complete the education within the fixed time.

Account must be taken of these directions when division in streams or lines takes place as from the beginning of the sixth school year, and the parents must realize that the allocation made at the end of the fifth school year is not binding in regard to admission to the "Real" section.

When the legislative power has stressed the necessity of the children admitted to the "Real" section being able to complete the education, it is due to the fact that, under the previous school system, a large number of children left the "examination middle school" prematurely without having received any complete education in any one subject and after a succession of failures

in the daily school work.

Admission to the "Real" section is not subject to any test. As a rule, it is for the discharging school to decide whether promotion to the "Real" section may take place. If the discharging school declares a pupil "unsuited" or "possibly suited", however, an entrance test may, if the parents wish, be held by the receiving school and, if successful, the child may be admitted.

On completion of the second form of the "Real" section, an examination supervised by the State shall be held in written arithmetic and mathematics and in written Danish. The result of that examination, in conjunction with the marks for general standard of attainment in a number of other subjects and with the discharging school's report on the pupil, normally determines whether admission to the senior section of a secondary school the "Gymnasium" may take place.

If the pupils seeking admission to the "Gymnasium" include some of equal eligibility on the basis of examination marks and assessment by the discharging school(s), the "Gymnasium" may, if the accommodation of the school is inadequate to admit all, arrange for a test to be held. Such a test will take the form of an interview, at which the "Gymnasium" examines the general ability and maturity of the pupils for going through the three forms.

7. Curricula in the Primary School.

(a) The first seven school years.

Through the first to the fifth form, the curriculum shall include written and oral Danish, writing, arithmetic, religious knowledge, history, geography, nature study, physical training, drawing and, for girls needlework. The instruction shall be

steadily progressive, so that the full range of subjects is not covered until the end of the fourth form. Such subjects as light woodwork, swimming and gardening may also be included in the curriculum during the first five school years.

During the sixth and the following forms instruction is continued in the subjects referred to above and the curriculum is extended to include physics, woodwork for the boys and domestic science for the girls, and one foreign language: English (or German).

As far as possible, school library work should be provided in connection with the teaching of various subjects.

Finally, subjects other than those mentioned may be included, subjects to the consent of the Minister of Education.

As far as the seventh form is concerned, the Education Act provides for the instruction to be rounded off in the subjects as far as this is possible having regard to the pupils who leave school at the end of the seventh form.

The same section of the Act prescribes for the curricula to be drawn up so as to permit of a coherent course of instruction for the classes aiming at the "Real" section as well as for the children likely to continue their education in the eighth and ninth forms of the main school. In other words, there are two considerations to be reconciled: first, the regard to a continued education and, secondly, the regard to a complete instruction in particular subjects, i.e. first of all the subjects of history, geography, and nature study.

It is further provided that, where practicable, the instruction given in the seventh school year shall be so organised as to take account of the children's future place in the working community and their further education.

By including optional subjects in addition to the compulsory ones and in the preparation of the syllabus of the individual subjects, the instruction may according to local wishes and needs be organised with regard to the children's abilities, aptitudes and interests.

A new development is the legal provision requiring that, as from the beginning of the seventh school year, children whose parents wish it, and who, in the opinion of the school, may profit by it shall be offered instruction in an additional foreign language: German (or English) and in mathematics.

Further, in the seventh school year, information is given about opportunities for employment, and the subject of community development with particular reference to the family ("family knowledge") shall be added to the curriculum. As a rule, the subjects covered by these two fields will be treated in connection with the subjects with which they may naturally be coupled.

The vocational guidance is designed to give the pupils a general knowledge of the conditions of the labour market and the individual opportunities for the young. In the future, a close co-operation will therefore be established between the school and the employment exchanges, who have special vocational advisers responsible for giving individual guidance to young persons.

The teaching of family-problems aims at meeting a number of problems of vital significance to the future life of the children. Subjects taken from the ethical and legal problems incidental to family life and from practical fields such as domestic economy and housing will be taken up in connection with civics, arithmetic and housecraft with a view to increasing the children's abilities for coping with the many problems attaching to daily home life.

In other words, the seventh form will, not only chronologically, but also as regards subjects, be a transition to the more advanced education given after compulsory school-leaving age in the "Real" section and in the voluntary eighth and ninth forms, respectively.

(b) The "Real" Section.

In the "Real" section instruction shall be given in Danish with Norwegian and Swedish, in religious knowledge, English, German, French, arithmetic and mathematics, in history with civics, geography, natural science, physics, writing, drawing, singing, physical education, and (for girls) in needlework or housecraft and (for boys) in handicraft. In addition, the curriculum shall include teaching of family-problems. Latin may be taught in the second and third forms of the "Real" section.

Of particular interest is a provision saying that the third form of the "Real" section may be organised as a special technical line with the main emphasis on the subject range of mathematics and physics.

Moreover, the basic vocational guidance given in the seventh form shall be continued in the second and third forms of the "Real" section.

The subject of French is optional; so is mathematics in the third form of the "Real" section, except of course on the technical line.

The instruction in writing, drawing, singing, housecraft and handicraft may be completed in the first form of the "Real" section.

The external examination to be held on completion of the third form of the "Real" section is still called the "Real" examination. It consists of written and oral tests. Written examination is held in Danish, English (or German), and in arithmetic and mathematics. On the technical line, the written examination in foreign languages on completion of the third form of the "Real" section may be replaced by a special test in mathematics and physics. No examination is held in religious knowledge or singing. As far as the oral tests are concerned, their number is determined by the Minister of Education.

(c) The Eighth and Ninth Forms.

In these two forms instructions is continued on the lines applying to the seventh school year with a view to preparing the transition of the young to further education of a general or vocational nature.

Having regard to the local education facilities, a division may be made into streams or lines aiming at the future occupation of the pupils in the practical life, if being a condition that no real vocational instruction is given.

The provisions concerned are new; not so the underlying problem. The possibilities of introducing instruction with a vocational bias in the top forms of the school have been discussed for quite a number of years.

The desire for taking up vocational subjects in the general department of the folk school is chiefly due to the development that has taken place within the working community, but also to the fate befallen the Education Act, 1937.

The aim of that Act was to provide equality between the examination-free middle school, on the one hand, and the

examination school on the other. Just as children from the examination middle school should proceed to advanced studies and particular professions, so the pupils of the examination-free middle school should be prepared to enter practical life in the community, i.e. primarily trade and industry. An increasing demand by trade and industry for a certificate also for apprentices led to increased pressure on the examination school by parents, while the respect for the examination-free classes diminished.

In the light of the legal provisions on education and on the basis of negotiations with leaders from various organizations and the educational experiments that have taken place throughout the country, some lines of policy have been drawn up in special syllabi for the work in the eighth and ninth forms.

These proposals are characterised by a high degree of flexibility, which is necessary in view of the highly varying conditions between the different areas of the country.

Some common lines of policy, however, remain.

It is thus proposed that all pupils of the eighth and ninth forms be given 20-24 periods each week in general subjects, and that during the remaining 10-14 weekly periods they be allowed to follow the instruction in subjects in the choice of which they have had a voice. In that way, the pupils may get some influence on their own curriculum.

The general curriculum includes of course the principal school subjects of Danish and arithmetic. Further, religious knowledge, physical education and a number of subjects and branches of subject coming under the collective term of "general information", including historical, geographical and biological subjects as well as subjects taken from vocational guidance,

civics and family knowledge.

The traditional division of subjects known from the first seven school years has thus been abandoned in these fields. The questions taken up under "general information" should be based on practical life. It is considered important for this information to be based on subjects relevant to the pupils, thus providing an opportunity to promote their personal development and prepare them for deeper, independent studies of the problems. The subjects proposed include such as are associated with the workplace, e.g. automation, rationalisation, safety, health and welfare on the workplace, the importance of co-operation (the atmosphere of the workplace), distribution and organisation of work, and duties at the workplace.

Similarly, the history of work on the basis of great inventions and discoveries, and subjects in the field of industrial geography in relation to some of the raw materials used in industry, their origin, preparation and social importance, are likely to create an interest in the subjects of general information.

The range of optional subjects cover those aiming more directly at the working community, such as workshop instruction, engine knowledge, typewriting, accountancy, and agricultural subjects.

The principles underlying the preparation of the syllabi relating to the subjects with a vocational bias include the following:

- (1) The subjects to be taught shall, despite the vocational bias, have such breadth of outlook and aim as to be of value to the children irrespective of their subsequent place in the working community. In that way, the danger of too early

- tying the pupils to any one particular occupation is avoided.
- (2) The teaching of Danish and arithmetic should be closely associated with the instruction having a vocational bias, to add to the interest in these two important subjects.
 - (3) Having regard to the pupils who leave school on completion of the eighth school year, the instruction should be so arranged as to provide a certain rounding off, without preventing the instruction given in the ninth form from being an organic continuation of the work of the eighth form.
 - (4) The instruction given in the eighth and ninth forms shall be organised with a view to the subsequent training provided by technical and commercial schools, the youth school, the branch training of non-skilled workers, etc., just as provision should be made for transition to the examination school.

In this light, the leaving examination on completion of the ninth school year will be given a value corresponding to that formerly held by the middle-school examination, thus promoting the efforts to give the eighth and ninth forms a favourable placing in the minds of parents and children alike.

Although leaving examinations have not previously been held in the examination-free school, tests will be introduced in connection with the eighth and ninth forms. The tests contemplated will be more comprehensive and revealing than those held by the examination school.

It is planned to divide the tests in Danish and arithmetic into disciplines. In Danish, separate marks should be given for ability of expression and ability to spell correctly; in arithmetic, the technical ability with regard to addition, subtraction

etc. and text-tests should be marked separately.

As pupils in these forms are not academically minded, quite a number are likely to leave school with reports showing rather low standards of attainment in Danish and arithmetic. The school should not conceal the fact but should also call attention to any good points which may be of advantage in the future occupation.

The optional subjects give scope for doing so. When pupils have some say in the choice of subjects, they are more likely to do well in the subjects of their choice.

Leaving certificates awarded on completion of the ninth school year shall contain an assessment of the personal qualifications of the pupil, his capacity for co-operation, his capacity and willingness to pay consideration to others, his diligence, his interest in his work, power of concentration, perseverance, etc. Experiences have shown that employers attach importance to these very qualities in the young persons entering the working community.

Though the Education Act, 1958, requires the establishment of an eighth form only from the beginning of the school year 1961/62, many such classes have already been set up; in the school year 1960/61 some 720, as against some 520 the year before.

There is little doubt that the coming years will see a growing interest in the implementation of these two school years. The extent to which the authorities will be prepared to develop the necessary facilities will be determining for the result of the efforts. Considerable expenditure in connection with workshops for practical training will be required. Efforts must be concentrated on the training of teachers, so that the intending teachers are being prepared at the training colleges for teaching

these pupils to the same extent as for teaching those whose education is to be completed in the traditional examination school.

Moreover, it is necessary for the attitude of the homes to be changed; if real progress is shown in connection with the eighth and ninth forms, parents are likely to overcome their doubts about that line of education.

Finally, it is of the utmost importance that employers accept the children leaving the eighth and ninth forms. Principally this has already been done by the leading people within industry and trade, but it still remains for the attitude prevailing by them to be adopted throughout the country, so that local employers in industry take an interest in these children who have shown inclination and desire for further education in these two forms.

The legal provisions relating to the eighth and ninth forms and the syllabi compiled open up new perspectives within Danish school education. In short, provision has been made for a more flexible educational system which will serve the interests of all concerned better than a too simple and rigid system based on a clear-out division of the children into two separated groups.

In the future, the instruction will provide far better opportunities for appealing to the abilities and potentialities lying more or less dormant in all young persons. This may elicit resources which so far have not been adequately utilised. The value to the community is obvious. To those working in the service of the school, however, the human aspect is of prime importance. The chief thing is for the individual child to receive an education which will make for harmonious and sound development, both as regards character and knowledge.

8. Special Classes.

The Education Act of 1958 stresses in sect. 2 the responsibility of the primary school to look after children who are handicapped in some respect or other. The Act says: "Special classes shall be set up for the benefit of children who because of speech defects, poor vision, partial hearing, low intelligence, or retarded reading ability are unable to derive sufficient profit from ordinary instruction,"

There are also other cases calling for assistance in the form of special education; for example, special instruction in arithmetic may be required. Further, observation centres will be needed for maladjusted children and for the teaching of children of compulsory school age who are in hospital, etc.

When the class teacher discovers that a child has difficulty in following the instruction, he will consult the special-education adviser (school psychologist), after he has discussed the problems of the child with the parents. Such advisers (school psychologists) are found in all the counties of the country and in most towns.

The largest group of children who are submitted to examination by the special-education adviser are those who are educationally subnormal. The causes may be different: lack of power of concentration, retarded reading ability or ability to do arithmetic, delicacy. These and other defects may result in the child failing to derive full benefit from the instruction.

A minor group of those referred for examination is made up of children who have difficulty in conforming to the standards of behaviour applying to home and school.

It is difficult, however, to keep these two groups separate for the particular treatment applying to each.

The examination is based on collection of data about the child, who is submitted to a number of tests. It is important for all particulars to be provided by home, school and the child itself. It goes without saying that interviews with the parents are important; the school medical officer is also consulted.

The tests applied include first of all tests of maturity, intelligence and character, as well as tests of educational attainments illustrating the result of the school work.
