

forge, he regards as an alternative with woodwork for the oldest pupils, and he has no doubt that other suitable sloyd occupations exist, or may be invented.

Mr. Struthers lays it down that "the measure of the introduction of manual work into schools must be the measure in which it conduces to increased efficiency in the general work of the school, and especially in the standard subjects." Having regard to this general condition he is able to report that during the last four or five years the serious treatment of kindergarten occupations in the preparatory classes has spread from a very few schools to practically every school of any size in the district, not only without loss of efficiency in the ordinary subjects, but with positive gain. In the junior standards (I., II., and III.) manual training has made considerable progress. It is to be found in some form or other in about half the Edinburgh board schools, and "from the favourable opinions expressed by the head-masters in their reports to the Board, a further rapid extension may be expected."

Expense of equipment is not regarded as likely to stand in the way of the extension of manual training. "The expense," Mr. Struthers says, "except in the case of woodwork, is trifling; and even in the case of woodwork it is not likely to prove a serious difficulty if once the desirableness of the instruction is recognised." But in the question of staff he finds "a difficulty of the gravest and most real character." The following are some of his remarks upon this point:—

"It goes without saying that, if manual instruction is to be successfully given, the teachers of the subject must possess the requisite technical skill. . . . I believe that a very adequate preparation might be secured in the case of the majority of future teachers if provision were made in the schools of the large towns, where manual training has been to some extent developed, for some systematic instruction of the pupil-teachers both in the theory and practice of the subject. . . . But, however the necessary skill may be acquired, it is of the last importance that teachers who undertake work of this kind should have a clear and abiding idea of what the object of it is. Hence it is desirable that some theoretical instruction—and discussion—should accompany the practical course. In the case of those who are teachers by profession there should be no great necessity for insisting on the educational aspect of the work. It is the requisite technical skill in which they are more likely to be lacking. Especially is this the case with woodwork (or ironwork) where the acquirement of the necessary skill in one previously destitute of it is a matter of months rather than of days or weeks. Yet it is simply indispensable that a teacher should himself be able to do reasonably well what he attempts to teach others. At first sight, the obvious thing to do would seem to be to employ a skilled artisan. But this in ordinary circumstances is an expedient of at least doubtful policy. Certainly there are artisans who are by nature teachers, or who quickly apprehend and adapt themselves to the educational aims of woodwork instruction in schools. To take a parallel case, I know of teachers of cookery, not trained teachers, whose grasp of educational objects and methods is as firm as that of those who are teachers by training and profession. But to employ any one to conduct a course of manual training simply on the ground of his skill as an artisan is a most hazardous proceeding."

"The Manual and Technical Elementary Instruction Act, 1895," of this colony makes it lawful for any Education Board to order that manual instruction be given in any public school under its control as if manual instruction had been included in the list of subjects prescribed in the Education Act. The Education Board and Inspectors of the North Canterbury district have had this subject under consideration, and their views are set forth in their respective reports. The Inspectors say:—

"Beyond the ordinary subjects of the syllabus, among which drawing, one of the most important instruments of manual training, is of course included, nothing has so far been done in the district in the desired direction except in a few isolated cases where the master, having himself some skill in a manual occupation, has interested himself in cultivating the taste among his pupils, and in a few large infant departments where a short period weekly has been devoted to the simplest forms of manual work—stick-laying, paper-folding, plaiting, colouring—to a certain extent in connection with lessons in drawing or counting.

"In the infant department, where freer conditions of method and subject, due to the absence of a prescribed syllabus, exist, the beginnings are most easily made; and little more difficulty should be found in adapting suitably graduated exercises to the First and Second Standard classes where the prescribed programme is limited to a few subjects, and much time must now be wasted in profitless repetitions. All this may be expected to be done during the usual school-hours, and in intimate relation with existing subjects; but when we approach the Third Standard the question of the time-table assumes a more serious aspect; and, although the occupations contemplated must, if they serve the chief purpose for which they are instituted, facilitate the ordinary standard progress, and therefore secure as good a result in less time than before, we are too conscious of the