

*Geography.*—During the year the tendency towards modern methods in geography has become more marked, and already the transition to nature knowledge has taken place in several schools. The beginning of geography must be approached not through maps or by word of mouth in the form of definitions learned and recited by heart, but by getting the children to observe the phenomena and geographical features of the neighbourhood as they actually appear to their eyes.

In one school in the Hot Lakes district the children had made capital models in plasticine showing the physical features of the surrounding country, and their knowledge of the subject was very full.

With regard to the knowledge of other countries, I feel that the illustrated papers supplied to most of the schools could be made very useful, much more so, indeed, than they are at present. I was very much impressed by an ingenious contrivance made by one of our teachers for using these pictures. It consisted of a shallow box having inside a roller at each end, one being fitted with a handle. Over these rollers the pictures were passed, and the result was a kind of endless chain of illustrations of all kinds—an invaluable aid in not only geography, but also in reading and English.

*Sewing.*—This subject continues to be well taught in nearly all the schools, and the amount of practical work done has greatly increased, till in the majority of the schools one finds garments of some kind or other being made. Cutting-out is taught in connection with this work, while in six schools regular instruction in dressmaking is given, the people willingly supplying the material. A class for adults has been arranged by the mistress at *Tekerepehi*, and is very much appreciated. The reports on the work forwarded to the International Exhibition, Christchurch, are not yet to hand, but I have learned that the gold and silver medals for the best-dressed doll were won against all comers by Maori girls belonging to *Whangape Native School*, which has for some years past earned the highest praise for this kind of work.

*Extra Subjects.*—Singing, drawing, and drill: The singing is in many schools a most enjoyable feature of the work; in nearly all schools it is well taught. The faults observed in last year's report—harshness and bad pitch—were not so noticeable this year, and a better class of songs was found. In nearly all the schools, part songs are taken, and I do not think the work can be regarded as satisfactory unless this is done. I should be glad, however, if all teachers were to make an effort to present five or six new songs every year. We have heard some songs so often that they no longer afford us much pleasure.

Drawing is still more or less unsatisfactory in the majority of the schools, being meagre in quantity and poor in quality. Blackboard instruction is not given as it should be, and the children are often set merely to reproduce as well as they can the copy on the chart. It is most likely that, in the new scheme of drawing, the chart will be of much less avail, and the work will consist of drawing from natural objects.

Drill: Physical exercises of various kinds, including exercises with wands, dumb-bells, or clubs, still form the greatest part of the drill in vogue in our schools, and in many of them the work is remarkable for the precision and regularity of the movements. There are still, however, several schools in which the work is not regarded with the importance that it should be, and I doubt whether regular practice is given. Ten minutes daily before school-work begins, or even less if that amount of time cannot be afforded, would be the best arrangement for this subject. This plan has already been followed in a few schools with marked effect.

*Handwork.*—The various elementary manual occupations—paper-work of all kinds, modelling in cardboard and in plasticine—receive very satisfactory treatment in those schools where they are taken, and a very interesting display is generally made at the examinations. School gardens have also been established at a few schools, and a general scheme of elementary practical agriculture is in course of preparation. The classes for instruction of girls in domestic duties, including cooking and laundry-work, are increasing in number and are proving the means of imparting very useful training. The apparatus supplied so far consists merely of a camp-oven or two and some bread-tins, with about 200 lb. of flour in the year—not a very elaborate outfit, but one which is similar to that which is possessed by the people. It would be of little use teaching elaborate cookery with up-to-date appliances. The fact that these are not procurable in the kainga would at once dishearten a girl accustomed to them from trying to cook anything without them.

There are now fourteen workshops established in connection with Native schools. Of these six were provided at the expense of the Government, two were established mainly through the efforts of the teachers, and six were provided mostly by the Maoris themselves, the Department having to find practically nothing but tools. The workshops have, on the whole, been productive of much good, and the work done in some of them has been much admired by competent judges.

I wish again to impress upon teachers in charge of workshops the necessity of insisting upon the proper care of the tools. Indeed, I feel that, in a school where this important part of the training is not adequately provided, the teacher lacks one of the first qualifications that should be required by the Department from a teacher in charge of a workshop.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION.

There are six institutions available for the purpose of affording higher education specially to Maori boys and girls. All of these are controlled by various religious bodies, the Government offering the following numbers of free places: *Te Aute College*, Hawke's Bay, 10; *St. Stephen's*, Auckland, 30; *Queen Victoria School for Girls*, Auckland, 20; *Hukarere Girls'*, Napier, 20; *St. Joseph's Girls'*, Napier, 33; and *Turakina Girls'*, Wanganui, 10.

Though the present regulations provide that candidates who have passed the Fourth Standard are eligible for a scholarship, the Department has been able in making selections to choose boys and girls that have passed Standards V, VI, or VII. There are still more free places provided for girls than for boys, and I am of opinion that steps should be taken to remedy the defect, which,