

factory. We have no desire to depreciate the value of this part of the instruction, but we are glad to notice that in some districts earnest and fairly successful efforts are being made to give the cookery lessons a higher educational value by using the familiar occupation of cooking as an aid to mental training. In one district a circular has been issued to cookery instructors setting forth in detail the kind and amount of theoretical instruction (as distinguished from demonstrations) that must form part of the course in cookery; arrangements being made at the same time whereby the instructors themselves may become familiar with the elementary scientific principles underlying the practice of cookery. Speaking generally, instructors in cookery have yet to learn that the goal towards which the instruction should tend is similar to that to which all practical instruction should be directed—namely, the training of the pupil's intelligence through familiar occupations, the useful application of the methods of science, and incidentally the acquisition of general manipulative skill.

Dressmaking and advanced needlework have been taken by eighty classes, as against sixty-four for the previous year. In most cases satisfactory work has been done, and evidence is not wanting that excellent results, from all points of view, are obtainable without having recourse to mechanical aids in the shape of chart systems.

There has been a considerable increase in classes taking elementary physical measurements; ninety classes were in operation, an increase of thirty-one. The remainder in our last report that the educational value of the work was often in inverse proportion to the amount of ground covered seems to have been not without effect. In one district special attention has been given to the construction of simple apparatus by the pupils for class use. Included in the apparatus was a number of simple balances. These did not, it is true, reach a high standard of mechanical excellence, but the essential parts were sufficiently accurate for the purpose in view, and made it possible for the pupils to carry out a useful series of exercises in weighing. In this connection it is suggested that much more general use of the woodwork classes might be made in connection with elementary physical measurements. The designing and preparation of drawings of apparatus within the capacity of the pupils might with advantage form part of a course in physical measurements. If to the equipment of the woodwork shop were added a few simple appliances for metal-working, the construction of useful and approximately accurate apparatus might well be undertaken by pupils. Additional interest and utility would be given to the course in woodwork, and pupils would be afforded an opportunity of gaining a more intelligent insight into the purpose and use of the simple apparatus required for an elementary course in physical measurements. The regulation regarding the time to be given to individual practical work by the pupils appears in some instances to have been wrongly interpreted by instructors. Demonstrations by the instructor with the assistance of certain members of the class cannot be regarded as complying fully with requirements. It should be understood that half of the whole time given to the instruction is to be spent by each pupil in individual practical work.

Considerable progress has been made in the organization of classes for subjects relating to rural pursuits. During the year 424 classes for elementary agriculture and dairy-work were in operation, as against 255 in the previous year. This increase may be taken as indicating that controlling authorities generally are realising the value of courses of instruction bearing directly on pupils' surroundings. Instruction in dairy-work has previously been confined practically to one district. We are now able to report a decided increase in the number of classes for this important subject. The appointment of a special itinerant instructor in the Wanganui District has made it possible for useful courses of instruction in the principles of dairying to be given in the northern and southern parts of this district. The total number of classes for dairy-work was twenty-six, as against two for the previous year. It has been advanced as a reason why children in dairying districts should not receive instruction in dairying at school that they have enough dairying in their homes. The conditions of life and labour in the dairying districts of the Dominion no doubt impose some measure of hardship on the children; but if those who consider that by making a course of dairy-work a part of the children's education you impose an additional burden upon them, could see the intense interest they take in the simple experiments, and the generally enthusiastic way they go about the practical work incident to the course, and could hear the intelligent answers given by most of the pupils to questions bearing on the value and meaning of the work done in the class, they would probably come to the conclusion that the instruction is not regarded by the children as "a burden grievous to be borne," but, on the contrary, is viewed rather in the light of a relief from the ordinary subjects of instruction. May not the attitude of the children toward the work be explained by the fact that in the classes in question they are dealing with a subject closely related to their life?

It seems hardly necessary at this stage to enlarge on the benefits likely to accrue to the pupil, the teacher, the school, and incidentally to the community from instruction in what is termed elementary agriculture, or, better, nature-study with an agricultural trend. Professor James says that manual training is the most colossal improvement that ever came into the schools of America, because the boys learn to work together and become co-operative instead of foolish little imps who are trying to get ahead of their fellows and crow over it. He points out that school gardens possess all these advantages of manual training with the added ones, over some forms of this discipline, of their feasibility almost anywhere, of easier inculcation of the sense of ownership, of working with the fundamental instead of the more accessory muscles, and of being essentially out-of-door work. The experience in America and Canada has been that devoting four or five hours a week, or even two hours a day, to nature-study and gardens on proper lines enables the pupils to accomplish more in the remaining time than they formerly accomplished in the whole time spent at school, and, further, that this work has given schools a new incentive, has raised the daily attendance materially, and has proved an "Open sesame" into both the