

B.A., has for the past three years laboured with great zeal to develop good lines of work in nature-study and elementary agriculture, and has issued, through the technical Department, a large number of useful and suggestive leaflets on various aspects of these subjects. The preparation and issue of a definite practicable course of work for small schools would perhaps have been of more service than these. In spite of the unavoidable shortness of the special courses of instruction he has been able to give in various districts, and of other serious obstacles, his work has been valuable and in great measure successful. The instruction given in woodwork is in general efficient, and as far as I can judge the instruction given in cookery is also satisfactory. Notes of the simple science lessons given in connection with cookery need to be available for examination when wanted.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Handwork in the Primary Schools.—The number of schools in which handwork, such as brush drawing, paper-folding, cardboard-modelling, free-arm drawing, plasticine modelling, &c., were taught was 151, and in those where the teachers had received special training for the teaching of this important branch of primary education excellent work was done. The Board's experts, Mr. Harry Wallace and Mr. F. C. J. Cockburn, as in previous years, visited many of the schools to give help and advice to the teachers, and their assistance in this direction was much appreciated. For the teaching of needlework in schools below Grade 4, having no female teacher on the staff, an annual payment of 10s. per unit of average attendance (with a minimum payment of £6 per annum in the case of any one school) is made by the Department under the Manual and Technical Instruction Act in the case of pupils receiving two hours' instruction per week by an external teacher. The importance of girls being taught how to use their needles is generally recognised by teachers, and last year in ninety-three schools sewing was taught under the above provision. The decision of the Board last year to pay over to the teacher of a swimming and life-saving class under the Manual and Technical Instruction Regulations 75 per cent. of the capitation earned by the class, no doubt proved an incentive to teachers to take up the teaching of this important subject, and last year swimming and life-saving was taught in twelve schools, as against two in 1907. Classes in cookery and woodwork for the pupils of the upper standards of the primary schools were conducted, as in the previous year, at the Newmarket, Newton, Ponsonby, Thames, and Whangarei Manual-training Schools. Woodwork was also taught by the headmasters of Bombay and Mayfield Public Schools respectively in their own schools. During the year grants were made by the Department towards the cost of erection of manual-training schools at Cambridge, Hamilton, and Otahuhu (woodwork-room only), and the ratepayers of Waihi voted a sum of £500 towards the cost of a similar school there, so that it is hoped that during the present year all these schools will be erected. Considerable progress was made during the year in the teaching of elementary agriculture. Those teachers who have had the advantage of attending a course of training under the agricultural expert, Mr. V. W. Jackson, B.A., have been, as a rule, keen in taking the subject up, and in 1908 the number of schools in which elementary agriculture was taught was ninety-one. Every possible help in the way of apparatus, advice, &c., was accorded to enthusiastic teachers, and the following bulletins and pamphlets were issued during the year: "Leaflet K: How Nature maintains a Virgin Soil; or, Natural Fertility and Food-cycles." "Wall-card L: The Cream-separator." "Wall-card M: Mixing Manures." "Leaflet N: How to find the Proportion of Essentials in Manures." Pamphlet: "The Water Culture of Plants." "Leaflet O: Examination Answers in Nature-study and Agriculture." "Wall-card P: The Codlin-moth Parasite." "Leaflet Q: A Nature-study of a Hakea Hedge." "Leaflet R: How seeds germinate." Pamphlet: "Some Problems in Agriculture for the Auckland Rural Schools."

A book for teachers on nature-study and elementary agriculture, embodying Mr. Jackson's experience in the Auckland schools during the past three years, has been written, and will be published during the present year. I regret to say that the prizes offered by the Board for the encouragement of nature-study and elementary agriculture in the Auckland public schools were practically not competed for. At some schools headmasters make every effort to beautify their school-grounds, whilst at others the ground around the school is allowed to become a perfect wilderness. Pakuranga School is an example of how schools can be improved. The headmaster, Mr. John Green, is one of the most enthusiastic teachers of nature-study that I have ever met. Whilst I was in England I was authorised by the Board to purchase a hundred sets of Babcock milk-testers. These have now come to hand, and will shortly be distributed to those schools who are taking up "milk experiments" as part of their school course in elementary agriculture.

Training of Teachers.—Classes in art and handwork for teachers in the service of the Board were conducted, as in previous years, in the evenings and on Saturday mornings at the Auckland Technical College. Classes in cookery and woodwork were held for teachers in Whangarei and in Thames, and in these subjects as well as in dressmaking at Auckland. The classes in hygiene and physiology for teachers in Auckland were again well attended. As in the previous year, the teachers in training at the Auckland Training College attended special classes in cookery, woodwork, elementary agriculture, art, and handwork at the Technical College. Summer schools were held at the Technical College during January for teachers from remote country schools. The art and handwork course was held for a fortnight, and was attended by fifty-eight teachers, whilst the course in elementary agriculture was held for three weeks, the number of teachers in attendance being twenty-two. The falling-off in the number of teachers attending these summer schools was due to the fact that in previous years the Board gave an extra week's holiday to those who attended, but last year no holiday was granted. It is to be hoped that the Board will see its way to go back to the old arrangement for next year. Special courses in nature-study and elementary agriculture for teachers were conducted at Aoroa, Te Kopuru, Dargaville, and Te Awamutu, in addition to the summer school and the course for teachers at the Auckland Training College. All these classes were most successful, and much appreciated by the teachers. It is