

information as we were in search of. We gratefully acknowledge the uniform courtesy and kindness with which we were everywhere treated, and the cheerful readiness with which our inquiries were answered and information was furnished.

We propose to report on the work of technical education under two divisions—(1) school classes, and (2) special and continuation classes.

*School Classes.*—(a.) Hand and eye classes : In regard to school classes established under the Manual and Technical Instruction Act, we have no reason to be dissatisfied with the position attained by Southland. Although it is desirable that the provisions of the Act should be more largely taken advantage of in certain types of schools, still, relatively to our school population the number of classes is large and the work done is becoming increasingly satisfactory as teachers more fully realise the purpose and place of manual work in our schools. On the whole, Southland is well abreast, and in some respects ahead, of the work accomplished in other school districts of the Dominion. Auckland has specialised in brushwork, and the work done is of a very high order. Here, however, there are two qualified instructors specially engaged to train the teachers through the medium of Saturday classes and by periodical visits to the schools. In Hawke's Bay, too, this subject is well taught, and the results are good. The plasticine modelling, the cardboard modelling, and the paper-folding classes as carried on in our own schools are quite equal to the best we saw elsewhere. Free-arm drawing is more extensively practised in the northern schools than in ours. If effective work in this subject is to be done, an extensive alteration of our class-rooms and the provision of a rather expensive equipment are necessary. In consequence this work is only being gradually introduced into our curriculum.

(b.) Elementary physical measurements : This subject, from what we could gather, is quite as well taught and, in proportion to our population, finds a place in as large a number of schools, as in any other district. The course of lectures recently given by Mr. Inglis, M.A., M.Sc., to our teachers was equal to the best course delivered in any part of the Dominion ; indeed, we might go further, and say that in no other centre have the requirements of teachers been better cared for than in our own. When a more complete and perfect equipment is provided—which it is our intention shall be provided with the capitation earned during this current year by the classes in operation—Southland will maintain her lead in this branch of school-work.

(c.) Cookery and woodwork classes : We inspected the cookery and woodwork rooms at all the centres visited, saw several of the classes in session, and examined the work executed by the pupils. We believe that in this department, too, Southland has no need to feel ashamed of her own achievements. We are fortunate in having, in these subjects, instructors equal to the best in the Dominion. The only question for serious consideration is that of the extension of the teaching of these subjects in other schools. It has long been our wish to establish a centre at Gore, where there is already in existence a partly equipped Technical School, and at which centre the children from the surrounding schools might attend for the purpose and receive instruction in these most important and useful branches of education. In the meantime only the boys and girls in the Gore High School, the Gore, and the East Gore Schools, are in receipt of this training. For three years past our Invercargill instructors have visited Gore every Tuesday for forty weeks each year for the purpose of conducting classes. We should like, when the permanent manual-training rooms which are to form part of the High School are erected, that cookery and woodwork instructors should be appointed to this centre. The question of finance is, however, a difficult matter.

If this centre is to earn sufficient capitation to pay its instructors an adequate salary apart from any contribution towards the central administration fund, it is necessary that all the boys and girls in the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Standards from every school near the railway-line between Wyndham and Lumsden should attend at Gore on one day a fortnight during the school year. Were there a sufficient number of pupils in and around Riverton to maintain the financial stability of the undertaking, a manual-training school might be established at this centre also, but such is not the case at the present time.

(d.) Elementary agriculture : The teaching of agriculture in the primary schools engaged our careful attention. Special instructors have been appointed in Auckland, Wanganui, Wellington, and Taranaki, while one officer distributes his energies over Marlborough, Nelson, and Grey. The instructor in the North Canterbury District resigned his position some time ago, but the Board has not so far taken steps to appoint his successor. Broadly stated, the duties of these officers include the organizing of the teaching of nature-study and elementary agriculture in their various districts, the supervision of the operations in the school gardens, and the conducting of the training classes for teachers. Further, some of these instructors carry on classes in technical schools and in various rural centres for persons engaged in agriculture or dairying. In passing, it may be noted that the attendance at the last-named classes has not hitherto been entirely encouraging.

In Auckland, teachers within reasonable reach of certain centres (four in number) are permitted by the Board to close their schools on two days a week for three consecutive months, and are thus enabled to attend classes for instruction for a total period of twenty-six whole days. In January and February a summer course, extending over twenty-four days, is provided for teachers who are resident in remote parts of the province and who cannot attend one or other of the centres referred to above. To enable these backblocks teachers to avail themselves of the full course, the Board extends their summer vacation for a fortnight. In June and July, 1907, a winter school for dairymen was held in the Auckland Technical College, and in August a short course for students in training was conducted at the Training College.