

kept by pupils. A definite course of work that could be overtaken without strain in the average country school, divided into sections for consecutive years (as far as such division is practicable), is still a desideratum, and an effort should be made to provide it. As changes of teachers are rather frequent in such schools, a common definite course of work is all the more needful. At the same time, I feel that the farming public expect the public schools to do more in this direction than can be reasonably looked for. They fail to recognize the limitations of the pupils' general knowledge.

It has been suggested to me by Mr. Grierson that were the capitation grant allowed for the teaching of elementary agriculture paid directly to the head teacher, or to the Chairman of Committee of a country school, local contributions and services, and enthusiasm for the work, would be more readily forthcoming; and I think this is true. Many teachers, I have reason to believe, have been greatly discouraged by difficulties and prolonged delays in getting supplies of needful appliances for the practical and experimental work, while one or two teachers have for this reason given up applying for recognition of their classes. The present divided direction of this work is certainly unsatisfactory.

I have no desire to depreciate the value of the instruction in woodwork and cookery now given to the pupils of Standards V and VI of the larger schools, but I would again draw attention to the fact that the taking-up of this work curtails the time available for teaching the general studies laid down in the syllabus by about two and a half hours per week on the average. Work for which twenty-five hours a week were formerly available has now to be overtaken in twenty-two hours and a half, though there has been no appreciable diminution in its amount. Under the newly issued regulations for cadets fifty-two hours per year have to be devoted to drill, which means that the time required for this is being increased by a quarter of an hour each week. In this way nearly three hours a week have been cut off from the time formerly available for teaching the general course laid down in the syllabus. In view of this, I am of opinion that the question of lengthening the school-hours of the upper classes in our schools calls for serious consideration. An extension of school-hours is not likely to be welcomed by teachers, but the example of other educationally enlightened countries may well weigh with us in deciding the question. I am decidedly of opinion that for adequate instruction in such subjects as civics, health, elementary science and agriculture, and singing more time is needed than can be devoted to them in the larger schools under existing conditions.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND MANUAL TRAINING.

In many ways the year was an eventful one, more especially on account of the fact that a commencement was at last made towards the erection of an up-to-date Technical College in Auckland, an institution of which the city has had great need for many years.

In April the Assistant Director, Mr. G. P. Darnell-Smith, resigned, to take up the position of an Assistant Director to the Bureau of Microbiology, New South Wales, and Mr. William Lewins, B.Sc., Inspector to the Education Committee, Blackburn, England, was appointed in his stead.

Primary Schools.

Handwork: As a result of my attendance at the International Art Congress in London in August, 1908, some slight changes in the courses of study in handwork were introduced during the year. As in previous years, Messrs. Harry Wallace and F. C. J. Cockburn visited many of the schools, and advised the teachers as to the courses of work and methods of teaching handwork subjects. Handwork subjects, such as brush drawing, paper-folding, cardboard and plasticine modelling, free-arm drawing, &c., were taught in 176 schools. *Swimming and Life-saving*: There was an increasing interest taken in this important subject, which was taught in fifteen schools. As a rule, teachers are quite in sympathy with the teaching of swimming, but unfortunately few of the schools are within easy distance of baths. In some instances creeks near the school have been made use of; but unless these are shallow, there is some danger in the case of beginners. *Needlework*: Special provision for the teaching of sewing in schools below Grade IV and having no female teacher is made under the regulations for manual and technical instruction, under which fifty-nine schools received capitation. There is no doubt that greater attention should be given to the teaching of this important subject to the girls in our public schools, and it is hoped that in the near future the Board will be able to make better provision for the training of teachers in needlework than at present exists. *Domestic Science and Woodwork*: As in previous years, cookery and woodwork classes for the pupils of the upper standards of the primary schools were conducted at Newton, Newmarket, Ponsonby, Thames, and Whangarei Manual-training Schools. Laundrywork was also added to the girls' curriculum at the Ponsonby, Newton, and Newmarket centres. A Manual-training School was also opened in May at Otahuhu, and this was attended by boys from the Otahuhu, Papaitoi, Papakura, Drury, and Manurewa Public Schools. Domestic science for girls has not yet been provided at this centre. In two of the public schools—Mayfield and Bombay—woodwork was taught by the headmasters. During the present year manual-training centres will be completed at Devonport, Cambridge, Hamilton, and Waihi. The importance of domestic science and manual training is now universally recognized, and it is hoped that before long a considerable extension in the teaching of these subjects will take place in the Auckland District, so that more of the country districts may enjoy the advantages now enjoyed by the towns. *Elementary Agriculture*: There was a slight falling-off in the number of schools in which elementary agriculture was taught last year, the number of recognized schools for this subject being eighty, as against ninety-one in 1908. This is rather disappointing in view of the fact that no fewer than 277 teachers in the service of the Board hold certificates qualifying them to teach this subject. No doubt many of these are engaged in town schools where there is perhaps not much facility for teaching agriculture, but I feel sure that if encouragement were given them in the way of awarding marks for the teaching of special subjects such as agriculture, more teachers would take up such subjects in their schools. It is also likely that we should see fewer "wildernesses" around the school if teachers knew that marks for "environment" would be largely awarded on the condition of the school grounds.