

No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM THE THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

Manual Instruction in Schools.

Instruction in various branches of elementary handwork, such as modelling brush drawing, free-arm and blackboard drawing, paper and cardboard work treated sometimes as separate subjects, but more often correlated with other subjects of the syllabus, as well as in the more specialized forms of handwork, such as woodwork, cookery, and elementary agriculture, was given in about 60 per cent. of the public schools during the year. Some particulars are given below :—

TABLE I.—SUBJECTS OF AND NUMBER OF CLASSES FOR MANUAL INSTRUCTION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Subjects of Instruction.	Number of Classes.	
	1908.	1909.
Elementary handwork	2,880	3,178
Woodwork	270	281
Ironwork	...	5
Agriculture and dairy-work	498	559
Elementary science	57	47
Physical measurements	94	101
Cookery	330	339
Laundry-work	...	60
Dressmaking	72	79
Swimming and life-saving	103	136
Physiology and first aid	51	57
Totals	4,355	4,842

The number of public schools in which handwork was taught was	1,240
The number of pupils under instruction was	116,538
The percentage of total roll number under instruction was ...	76.5
The payments by way of capitation, grants, and subsidies in aid of classes amounted to	£20,536 18s. 8d.
The average cost per pupil was	3s. 6.3d.

The number of specially equipped centres for cookery, laundrywork, wood-work, and ironwork is now about fifty.

Increasing attention continues to be given to instruction in elementary agriculture. School gardens, experimental and observation plots, and, in many cases, suitable laboratory practice, form special features of the instruction, which in several districts is supervised by special itinerant instructors. The increase for the year in the number of classes was sixty-one. Suitable instruction in dairy-work is in many cases included in the course of instruction in agriculture. The total average attendance at classes for agriculture and dairying was 9,184.

It has been felt that the courses of instruction at many of the district high schools, most of which are located in rural districts, have not, for various reasons, been as intimately related to rural pursuits as they should be if the schools are properly to fulfil their functions. With the view of assisting the Education Boards, some of which have for some time past been endeavouring to arrange suitable courses of rural instruction in connection with the secondary departments of district high schools, provision has been made for a special capitation payment of £5 10s. per annum on account of each pupil taking an approved course of agricultural instruction. It is expected that with the aid of the additional funds so provided Education Boards will be enabled to make more satisfactory arrangements for efficient instruction than have hitherto been possible.