

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

Subjects of Instruction.	Number of Classes.	
	1910.	1911.
Elementary handwork	3,489	3,530
Woodwork	273	315
Ironwork	8	6
Agriculture and dairy-work	666	832
Elementary science	109	76
Physical measurements	118	122
Cookery	308	342
Laundry-work	63	69
Dressmaking	90	91
Swimming and life-saving	165	200
Physiology and first aid	78	75
Totals	5,367	5,658

The number of public schools in which recognized classes for manual instruction were held was 1,436.

The number of pupils in attendance at recognized classes for cookery was 6,110.

The number of pupils in attendance at recognized classes for woodwork was 6,742.

The number of pupils in attendance at recognized classes for agriculture was about 15,000.

The number of pupils receiving instruction in other branches of manual instruction was 118,026.

The payments by way of capitation and subsidies on voluntary contributions were £20,892 10s.

The average rate of payment per class was £3·7.

Special grants for buildings and equipment totalled £4,745.

It is gratifying to note an increasing tendency on the part of teachers to regard handwork as a method rather than as an isolated subject of instruction, and to provide for training in handwork under the headings of other school subjects.

Subjects such as woodwork and cookery continue to be taught on the central system, and by special instructors. There are now over sixty well-equipped manual-training schools in operation. In the larger towns special buildings separate from the technical college or school have been provided. In the smaller towns the manual-training centre is usually attached to the district high school, the secondary school, or the technical school, as the case may be. While the central system cannot be regarded as an ideal one from many points of view, yet for reasons of economy it appears at present to be the only practicable means of providing instruction. The work is, unfortunately, too often treated as an isolated subject in which the school staff takes little interest, and has little or no connection with other school subjects. These defects, which cannot be regarded as other than serious, would, it is considered, be less pronounced if the course of work were arranged after consultations between the head teachers of the schools served by the centre and the special instructors. The time spent by pupils in travelling to the centre, and the consequent break in the school-day, are also to be regarded as drawbacks to the system. In the case of schools at some distance from the centre these are met, to some extent, by increasing the duration of the lesson, thus allowing the course to be completed in a shorter time.

It is a matter for regret that very few public-school teachers have given instruction to their classes in either woodwork or cookery, in spite of the fact that during recent years special classes in these subjects have been established by Education Boards with the view, presumably, of giving their teachers the requisite training.

Elementary instruction in subjects bearing on agriculture was given in 832 schools as compared with 666 for the previous year. Instruction in this branch of manual training is, in the case of ten of the thirteen Education districts, supervised by special itinerant instructors. Experimental and observational work—the results of which, in some cases, have proved of no little value locally—is a feature of the course of instruction in most districts. Considerable attention is also being given to instruction, of an elementary character, in dairying, especially in the North Island.