

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT.

At Feilding the total roll number was 328, and the number of individual students was 285. There were 23 free-place students—15 junior and 8 senior—on the books. Classes have been held in the following subjects, the roll number being shown in brackets: English and arithmetic (22), book-keeping (26), shorthand and typewriting (30), art needlework and design (15), dressmaking (24), millinery (13), woodwork (18), Maori (10), art (43), carving and metal-work (18), first aid and ambulance (14), veterinary science (5), teachers' art (49), teachers' singing (41). The attendance has on the whole been very satisfactory, and good work has been done by both teachers and students. The classes in commercial subjects are not as well patronized as they ought to be in a town the size of Feilding, nor is the number of free-place students taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the classes as high as it might be. It was found impossible to run plumbing classes this year owing to the shortage of students. Next year it is expected that there will be a sufficient number of youths to form a working class. Four of the students succeeded in passing the Board's preliminary stage of book-keeping. Several students sat for various art examinations under South Kensington, but results are not yet to hand. The Feilding Chamber of Commerce very kindly donated prizes for commercial subjects. It is hoped that next year arrangements may make it possible to award prizes in other subjects also. Technical classes have been conducted during the year at the following centres: Apiti, Pohangina, Ashhurst, Bunnythorpe, Kimbolton, Cheltenham, Bull's, and Rongotea. At Apiti and at Pohangina technical-school buildings have been erected and equipped, which has greatly assisted matters. The classes at Apiti have been remarkably well attended, and excellent work done under the able direction of Mr. James Matthews, to whom great praise is due for his energetic prosecution of technical work in his centre. The work at the other centres has been uniformly good, and the various instructors concerned merit much praise. It is very remarkable that the subject of wool-classing, which last year was so successful, has this year been a failure. It is difficult to account for this, but probably the high prices ruling for wool have somewhat discounted the value of classing.

LEONARD J. WATKIN, Director.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF THE SUPERVISORS OF AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTION.

School Classes in Agriculture and Dairy-work.

1. *Northern District.*—During the year the motor cycle provided by the Board has been of great service in connection with these classes. In suitable weather a run of a few minutes only was required to reach a second school. Owing to this, and by taking advantage of differences in time-tables, I have frequently been able to give an hour's instruction in each of the four schools. The most noticeable development in connection with school agriculture in this district has been the great interest taken by teachers and pupils in improvements of the grounds. At the Hawera Agricultural and Pastoral Society's show a class was arranged for the "best-kept school-grounds," and twelve schools entered. More attention has also been paid to the growing of flowers, and to the planting of native trees and shrubs. In the majority of schools a good beginning has been made in the establishing of orchards. This work I have long desired to see seriously taken in hand. I know no branch of agriculture in which our boys and girls take a keener interest than in the broader principles of the proper treatment of fruit-trees, and in the application of these to pruning, soil-cultivation, and manuring. Several of our schools have established apiaries on a small scale, but there has not been the advance expected by me. The reason for this can be found in that our summer holidays come at a time when most attention has to be given to bees. Increased attention is being paid to trenching, surface cultivation, and to the growing of green crops. Our soils readily respond to good cultural treatment. In this connection it may be mentioned that several schools have in the past depended too much on the addition of fertilizers to the plots, but this practice is steadily being replaced by more suitable methods of tillage. I hope to initiate district manurial experiments early next season. The application of fertilizers to the soils here has been in the past altogether too haphazard. Fortunately a keen desire is evinced by teachers to have further information in this line, and to have more systematic work undertaken. Increased interest is being taken in dairy-work, several teachers having expressed a desire to take up the combined course next year. It would be advisable for the Board to make a regulation that all teachers in this district taking or about to take up dairy-work should be expected to attend the proposed course of instruction at Hawera. In several schools there has been an improvement in the way in which the notebooks have been kept, but on the whole they still leave much to be desired. Necessary records are kept, but there is not sufficient individuality shown in the book-work of the pupils. With one or two exceptions garden tools are well kept. In several schools they are as well looked after as one could wish. At Hawera and Patea District High Schools two hours a week were devoted to agriculture and dairy-work. A great deal of practical work was attempted, but I am not satisfied with the results. I believe that the ordinary staff of the schools should be more and more used in connection with rural course agriculture. The instructors could take short courses in special branches. Weakness was shown by the pupils in suitably expressing the results of their observation. I should therefore like to see more correlation of agricultural subjects with oral and written composition. Next year I hope to take the boys to the Moumahaki State Farm for instruction in farm practice. A short course for teachers in elementary practical agriculture was taken in Hawera, and good work was done by all who attended.

2. *Central and Southern Districts.*—At the end of the year 1910 the number of classes in elementary agriculture and dairy science was 130, the number of pupils receiving instruction being 2,556. At the end of this year (1911) the number of classes has increased to 139, the number of pupils receiving instruction being 2,385. During the year I have been engaged in visiting schools where agriculture is taught, in teaching in some of the district high schools, in supervising the classes in practical agriculture at Marton, in teaching physiology to the Wanganui pupil-teachers on Friday evenings, and agriculture to teachers on Saturday afternoons. The gardens on the whole are fairly well kept. In a few cases the work is excellent. In many of the schools much attention is being given to the beautifying of the playground. The successful attempts made during the year should act as an incentive to other teachers