

to improve the appearance of their playgrounds. Possibly, if a considerable demand arises for shelter-trees and ornamental shrubs, we may be able to grow a number of suitable trees and distribute them amongst the schools. Many teachers who are taking the combined course find that a period of twenty hours is not enough for the agricultural work. Probably a better division of the time would be twenty-five hours for agriculture and fifteen for dairy science. In indoor experimental work some good work was done in several schools. It is now quite clear that chemicals and expensive apparatus are not necessary for school experimental work. In some schools I found the pupils brimming over with information about the experiments they had been working with home-made apparatus. The garden tools have been well looked after during the year. Through the generosity of Mr. James G. Wilson a piece of ground was set apart at Marton for the use of the boys of the district high schools. In addition to providing the land, Mr. Wilson also provided the horses and farm tools. The boys travelled from Wanganui, Feilding, and Taihape by train to Marton. They worked about four hours a week. We did not make a start until October, and in consequence did not succeed in doing as well as we would have liked. As a schoolroom is in course of erection alongside the ground, we hope to be able to show better work for the coming year. A very successful camp of instruction in animal knowledge was held at Mr. E. Short's farm, "Almadale," Feilding. About 40 boys were in attendance. Regular lessons on horses, cattle, and sheep were given. The boys gained a very considerable insight into the methods of handling valuable animals. We thank Mr. Short for giving us the opportunity of studying his pedigree herds.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF ITINERANT INSTRUCTORS.

Science.

Since commencing my duties in April I have taken the various subjects of the science courses at Hawera, Patea, Wanganui, Feilding, and Taihape, comprising the following subjects: Botany, chemistry, physical measurements, practical mathematics and surveying, agriculture, electricity and magnetism, heat, and trigonometry. Excellent progress has been made in most centres, notwithstanding the fact that some of the classes were for a time greatly disorganized through sickness. I should like especially to mention the keenness of the lads at Feilding and at Taihape in connection with botany, which has proved to be the most popular subject of the rural course. The science notebooks of many are a credit to themselves and to their school, and are well worth preserving, some being worthy of very special mention. A genuine spirit of work prevails in most centres, and progress is correspondingly rapid, and the maintenance of discipline, as a result, requires no further attention. Pupils have been prepared for Junior Civil Service and Matriculation, and excellent results are anticipated. The absence of a course of pure mathematics has materially affected some of the work in surveying and in physical measurements. I would suggest that in physical measurements, at least, the permanent staff take some of the more elementary work. None of the schools is completely equipped with the necessary apparatus for the teaching of this subject, but this could partly be remedied by having much of it constructed by the pupils themselves in the woodwork classes. At Wanganui I have taken the pure sciences bearing on the engineering course, and comprising electricity and magnetism, heat and trigonometry. Here, too, the work in trigonometry was greatly handicapped through lack of training in pure mathematics, algebra in particular.

Woodwork.

1. *Wanganui and Northern Districts.*—There were in the Wanganui and Northern Districts a total of 18 classes. The attendance was generally good. As intimated in last year's report, an attempt has been made to vary the type of models. Many of the stereotyped manual-training models, having their origin in the English schemes of a decade ago, have been discarded, especially in the Standard VI course, and models with a more obviously practical everyday use have been substituted. Towel-rollers, knife-cleaners, tabourets, &c., are made with greater zest, inasmuch as the parent exhibits a livelier interest in such objects than in those models that can often only by courtesy be described as useful. It is not quite so easy to arrange the various tool operations in their correct sequence as generally recognized, and owing to the fact that fewer models are made there is the disadvantage of less practice in drawing. This deficiency, however, is partly compensated for by a series of special lessons in practical plane geometry. At Hawera the rural-course pupils took a course in elementary building-construction and the principles of mechanics as related to life on the farm. There was some overlapping in the teaching of this subject by the science and woodwork instructors, but in future a more definite division of the work will be made. The practical work undertaken by boys in their first year was the making of ladders, gates, and other useful farm accessories. The balance of the class, consisting of boys in their second year, built a small shed, the various stages in its construction being shown in the accompanying photographs.* It is proposed that some instruction in metal-work be given next year. A suitable room and appliances will in that case need to be provided. It is possible that Mr. Browne will arrange for the use of the present plumbing-room at Hawera. It would be suitable if forge-work were not included in the course.

2. *Southern and Central Districts.*—Classes have been held in Palmerston North, Feilding, and Marton. The average attendance has been 17 for forty lessons. Satisfactory work has been done, and the conduct of the pupils has been, with but few exceptions, of a good standard. Greater interest has been taken in the work than hitherto, especially by Standard VI, owing to the models being larger and more of a simple structural character. In Palmerston a number of the tools have been replaced by new ones, which change has been much appreciated by the boys, who have been enabled to do much more accurate and satisfactory work.

The secondary classes at the Feilding and Marton District High Schools did very good work. The conduct has been of a very high order, the boys entering into their work with enthusiasm, and

* Not reproduced.