

by making the design always for some definite purpose—*e.g.*, a border for a linoleum, a table-centre, or a curtain; a design to ornament a tile, a rectangular panel, a circular centre for a tablecloth, a corner of a handkerchief, &c. Colour work can also be co-ordinated with nature drawing, and with the drawing of plans and elevations. Care should be taken, moreover, that the colour of the material used corresponds as closely as possible with the colour of the object dealt with. To represent brown footballs in red, white, and blue is not only ridiculous, it is injurious to the pupils' power of colour-perception.

History and Civics.—We reported at some length on this subject last year, and regret that reference is again necessary. Its value as a means of training in patriotism and citizenship in the present national crisis has assumed an importance which cannot be too strongly emphasized. If our young people are worthily to sustain and discharge their responsibilities and duties they must have some knowledge of the nation's history, and some understanding of the lessons to be learnt therefrom. They must be taught to appreciate the freedom enjoyed by all who live under the British flag, and the struggles of our forefathers in securing this freedom, and to be ever ready to defend those free institutions which form so important a part of our national life. History and civics should be so interwoven as to form one comprehensive subject, supplying knowledge of the past and giving some training in civic and national duties of the present. In our best schools the treatment of this subject shows how fully its importance is realized; in others, however, the teacher makes but little headway, and the pupils leave the school in lamentable ignorance of their heritage from the past, and, we fear, with but a limited appreciation of their duties in the future. We feel that better results would be obtained by the use of suitable books—each dealing with a definite period or phase of history—and reinforced by vivid personal teaching; the whole scheme making provision for memorizing the names of sovereigns (in order) and some of the most important dates, so as to form a framework on which details may rest. A series of four books, "The Pupils' Class Book of English History" (E. J. S. Lay), recently published by Macmillan and Co., seems well adapted for the purpose. (Books I, II, and III, 6d.; Book IV, 8d.). Greater provision should be made for the teaching of New Zealand history, more especially the achievements of early pioneer settlers and the circumstances of early colonization. In localities within reach of places of historic interest such an addition to the history programme would be especially appropriate.

Geography.—In a number of country schools this subject showed signs of unskilful treatment. Many teachers fail to realize that in its initial stages geography is merely a branch of nature-study, and that much of the physical geography in the upper classes can also be included in the nature-study programme; further, that physical, commercial, and political geography can to a large extent be co-ordinated. It was disappointing to find that but little attempt was made to link up this subject with the daily happenings recorded in the newspapers. If this were done a good deal could be learnt in an interesting way, and the teaching invested with a reality often lacking under existing treatment.

Science, Nature-study, and Health.—In some schools commendable work is being done in this group of subjects. Observations and experiments are carefully made, facts are discovered or deduced, and full records are kept. Too frequently, however, the instruction is not in keeping with the underlying principle of science-teaching. It aims at conveying information by means of lecturettes rather than by first-hand questioning of nature, and it deprives the pupil of the pleasure associated with the act of discovery and the sense of achievement. There is also a tendency to treat these divisions of knowledge as altogether separate subjects, instead of regarding them as interrelated courses of study.

Manual Training.—One of the predominant tendencies in modern education is the emphasis given to manual training, which is becoming an essential feature in the work of primary schools. Success depends in a great measure on a knowledge and appreciation of scientific method: in woodwork, for instance, largely upon accuracy of measurement; and in cookery, upon a knowledge of the first principles of chemistry and physics. Handwork in the lower classes, a pleasing feature in many schools, does not receive the attention it deserves in a number of country centres, where the value of the work as an educative factor and in providing employment for pupils when the teacher is occupied with other classes is not fully recognized. In the upper standards, woodwork, cookery, and laundry-work, in schools within reach of manual-training centres, gardening and other kindred means of training in manual dexterity, have made considerable advance in quality and systematic treatment. An extension of the woodwork might profitably be made by the introduction of "light woodwork"—*i.e.*, work with prepared strips and lighter tools, done on tables or even on school-desks. It could be used as a substitute for the ordinary woodwork where centres do not exist; or, if introduced into classes below those supplying the centres, would lead up to the heavier woodwork of the more advanced pupils.

The Service.—We cannot conclude our report before conveying to the service our appreciation of its loyalty, patriotism, and sense of civic and national duty. The response to the nation's call was in every way worthy of the service, and the cheerful and whole-hearted enthusiasm of those who are left in the discharge of onerous and responsible duties, either shorthanded or with staffs relatively inefficient, is beyond all praise. The training our young people are receiving in the great majority of schools should do much to prepare for the strenuous days awaiting the community when the war is over and commercial and industrial competition again claims the attention of civilized nations.

We have, &c.,

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