

with mustard, ryecorn, and vetches, definite educative results have been obtained. In addition to the increased fertility as indicated by the crops, the physical condition of the soil has been decidedly improved.

At all our schools an endeavour is made to carry out our work on the lines of modern scientific teaching, and, furthermore, to correlate it as far as practicable with that of local farm practice. Variety tests are under way with mangolds and potatoes. Southland Up-to-Dates are being tested alongside of local. Keen interest is evinced throughout the whole district in the potato-growing competition (1916-17). With regard to our fruit-tree culture and nursery-work, the majority of the teachers here have now a good grasp of the subject. The results on the whole are most gratifying. At the Main School alone upwards of 350 trees have been successfully budded or grafted this year, and will be removed to the pupils' home gardens. Several hundreds have also been worked at our district high schools. With the surplus trees from these orchards are being built up at teachers' residences where desired.

I have much pleasure in stating that throughout the whole district there is ample evidence of a real live interest in the work not only by teachers and pupils, but by parents as well.

OTAGO.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS.

Imbued with a notion that a primary-school system should concern itself only with the literary and mathematical side of education, for some years many of our teachers evinced a want of appreciation of the aims and educative values of manual instruction, with the result that the manipulative exercises were regarded as additional subjects, and their inclusion was justified on the grounds that they were only counter-irritants to book-work; but as the result of different leavens a fermentation of ideas set in, and manual work is now treated not as a new subject, but as a new method of applying the principles of Pestalozzi, which have for their objective the promotion of the child's development morally, physically, and intellectually. Not infrequently have we found that pupils who appeared abnormally dull and irresponsible in the literary work have been wonderfully stimulated in self-expression through the exercise of the motor activities; while with all, in the hands of thoughtful teachers, such work generates the habit of self-reliance, keeps the interest and the attention cheerfully engaged, and reduces the disciplinary function to a minimum. From the point of view of the practical educationist the manual dexterity is developed at the age at which it should be developed if it is to reach the pitch needed in maturer years. Where the subjects of manual instruction are judiciously co-ordinated with the other subjects of study, and the schemes of work are carefully graded, we find the results most satisfactory; but in those few cases where the subjects are isolated and the schemes lacking in continuity or constructiveness, a powerful educational factor is rendered inoperative and its efficiency impaired through careless treatment or want of appreciation of the aims and scope of manual instruction. Handwork is taken in all schools, the branches for the junior classes being in the main paper-work, colour work, and basket-work, and we record with satisfaction a more extensive use of plasticine. In the middle classes the favourite branches are colour work and carton-modelling. In the former branch we note a growing interest in the application of colour work in the drawing of natural objects, while in the latter there is still a lack of close co-ordination with measurement and number work.

In the senior classes brushwork, woodwork, and cookery have been continued at the manual-training centres, while in the majority of the rural schools the pupils continue the elementary agriculture in connection with garden plots. In this subject much more might be done in regard to the principles underlying the subject, and in future we shall insist on this phase of the work receiving more attention than it has hitherto received. During the year the swimming classes at the Oamaru and Dunedin municipal baths were conducted with highly satisfactory results.

SOUTHLAND.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

Elementary Handwork.—Elementary handwork forms now a regular part of the curriculum in practically all the schools of this district. As in former years, the subjects that have received most attention are paper-folding, plasticine-modelling, and cardboard-work. In addition to the value of these subjects in affording opportunities for useful manipulative exercises, teachers now appreciate more fully the usefulness of this work in aiding by concrete illustration the teaching of other subjects of the syllabus. Undoubtedly the more intimate the correlation the greater the value of the instruction imparted. For colour work in connection with drawing the use of pastels in the lower classes has greatly increased, and the number of schools taking brushwork shows a corresponding decrease. For the upper standards, however, brushwork is still popular.

In all schools where the children of the upper classes do not attend at the special centres for instruction in woodwork and cookery a course in cardboard-work is being followed. This subject, in addition to being one of the best substitutes for the course in woodwork, is, in the hands of the intelligent teacher, of the greatest assistance in such subjects as drawing, geometry, and arithmetic. Not only is the constructional work interesting to a child, but it calls for care and accuracy of the highest order if the finished results are to be satisfactory, and for this reason as a preparatory training for a course in woodwork it cannot be excelled.