some will prefer to tint free pencil drawings, or even instrumental drawings; others, again, will prefer to do free nature drawings in colour without the aid of the pencil; while still others may prefer to combine colour work and design.

Nature-study and Agriculture.—One of the main objects of nature-study is to put the children in sympathy with nature, to give them an intelligent interest in their environment, and to develop a desire for beautiful surroundings; but it is not enough that nature-study should aim merely at creating "an atmosphere." Such teaching is in danger of becoming hazy, indefinite. It is quite possible to lead children to an appreciation of the beauty of nature and at the same time to give it a distinct utilitarian bias. It adds greatly to the effectiveness of teaching to have in view some definite purpose, and in a country like ours that definite purpose should be to prepare the way for subsequent lessons in elementary agriculture. Hence a large part of the nature-study work in every rural school should consist of lessons on plant-life, with a few on insects and other topics directly or indirectly connected with agriculture or horticulture. The lessons on plant-life should be so chosen that by the time a pupil is ready for promotion to S5 he will be able to recognize the weeds and grassses in the school-ground, and have a fair knowledge of such topics as the following: Conditions necessary for germination and growth, the more obvious functions of roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruit, and how these functions are discharged; the life-history (including the seed and mode of germination) of a few typical plants, say two per year—*e.g.*, bean, wheat, potato, &c. Such a course would form a very good foundation for a course in agriculture, or in agriculture and dairy science combined. Further, this kind of work in the lower classes, followed by a course largely agricultural or horticultural in S5 and S6, is well suited for many town schools, for why should not the town boy be fitted and encouraged to take up country life if he so wishes? We find it necessary again to draw attention to the lack of co-ordination between indoor and outdoor work in many schools where elementary horticulture forms part of the curriculum. It is most necessary that pupils should be familiar with actual gardening operations, but it is equally necessary that the training involved should not be limited to purely manual effort. And yet we constantly find schools where training in horticulture is practically confined to operations in the garden itself, and where little or no class-room work is provided for in the programme. We would refer teachers to the remarks on this matter made in our annual report for 1913.

Handwork.—Though the teaching of handwork is in many schools really very good, there are a great many in which the treatment is not nearly so satisfactory. It is essential that handwork should be developed in an orderly and systematic way, and that in each school there should be a definite progressive scheme of work. Such a scheme is often wanting. The handwork in the infant classes is usually good, that in S1 and S2 frequently so, and that in S5 and S6 usually very good where provision is made for cookery and woodwork. In S3 and S4, however, results are too often disappointing. In most infant-rooms modelling in plasticene is most creditable, and some very fine imaginative work is done in the illustration of stories. In the junior classes the value of modelling as an aid to nature-study and free drawing is not fully understood. The problem in drawing and modelling is twofold—first to train pupils to observe and appreciate form, and second to represent form; and there is no more effective means of securing this appreciation of form than actually fashioning the object—leaf, twig, or fruit—constantly comparing the representation with the reality. Not only is the drawing improved, but the powers of observation are trained, and the knowledge gained in the nature-study lessons is made more real and definite. In paper-work, too, the chief fault lies in a failure to make the best use of it as an aid to other subjects, or rather as a means of teaching other subjects. Paper-tearing can be used to illustrate stories; paper-cutting can be used in connection with early lessons in design; paper folding and cutting should be used in order to make elementary geometrical notions real to the child, and to give him a training in certain parts of arithmetic; and in all these occupations there will be found opportunities for training in language. Obviously deftness of fingers and neatness and accuracy of work should be amongst the objectives, but the primary aim should be to use the paper-work as a means of teaching other subjects. It is to be regretted that more schools do not undertake a course of carton and cardboard work in S2, S3, and S4. It would provide an interesting and extremely effective way of teaching instrumental drawing, geometry, and mensuration.

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We have, &c.,

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