

trated on the preparation of words fairly within the vocabulary employed in composition, and by refraining from the attempt to prepare the extended list of words that the pupils are able to master in reading. The writing in general gives evidence of careful instruction, and the written exercises are in most schools worked with neatness and intelligence.

Arithmetic.—The results in this subject varied considerably. Where oral exercises and a careful study of the elements form the basis of the instruction, with practice under strict conditions, the final appearance will not be disappointing. The exercises in mental arithmetic set during the annual visits were not attended by a sufficiently high degree of success. Owing to the number of new elements and processes introduced in the syllabus for the Fifth Standard the necessity for thorough methods exists to the greatest extent in that class.

Geography.—In this subject the local institute of teachers drew up and issued to the members a detailed course, and where this was presented it was accepted as suitable. The subject usually received satisfactory treatment, except that the mathematical, physical, and commercial branches were not sufficiently correlated.

Drawing.—Good line work in freehand, largely from copies, and the preparation of geometrical exercises, formed in the majority of schools the main course in the subject. Drawing in outline from objects and elementary design, with some use of colour, were included in a few schools, and should form an important part of the course in all schools.

History.—This subject receives a fair amount of attention. The sectional treatment, sometimes adopted, compares unfavourably with the concentric plan, in which biography is prominent in the studies of the younger pupils, and the growth of the Empire and the development of free institutions in those of the older ones.

Elementary Science and Nature-study.—A very prominent part of the course is agriculture. Dairy testing is included, and a large number of schools have suitable school-gardens. The laying-out of the grounds owes a great deal to local effort, and special encouragement is provided by the Tisch and Cuthbert Shields, which are open to competition by the various schools. In arranging the course it is essential to include lessons in health, embodying very elementary physiology, and, if possible, at least occasional lessons to boys in physical measurements. The cookery, health lessons, and needlework will also form the nucleus of instruction in home science to the girls. There is scope therefore for careful consideration of the requirements, while avoiding the temptation to occupy too large a portion of the available school time.

Handwork.—It is seldom found that, at least in the preparatory classes, a course in handwork is not in operation. Sticklaying, paper-folding, and carton-work, with woodwork and cookery in the higher classes, where the opportunity of vicinity to larger centres renders instruction in the latter feasible, are the branches chiefly embodied. Modelling in plasticine and brushwork are selected by some teachers. It is usual to find a number of good specimens of work. There is, however, some need for stricter methods and of correlation with oral expression.

Physical Instruction.—All schools the teachers of which have received special instruction include a course of exercises. Exception cannot be taken so much to the degree of precision and interest exhibited in the exercises (although in some cases these are not sufficiently in evidence) as to the general absence of progression in the preparation of the course. In some schools, although the teachers have received special training, barely eight tables have been attempted. Swimming has formed a prominent feature of the physical training in a number of schools. Swimming-baths are available in several centres, and a pool in an adjacent creek furnishes a substitute in other places.

Singing.—It was usual to find good tone and tune in the rendering of school songs. In very few cases, however, had notation and reading from sight received attention. A careful study of the requirements of the syllabus of instruction will indicate a suitable method and course.

Needlework.—In this subject the schools reached a high standard. As in previous years efforts were directed to the support of Red Cross and patriotic movements.

Discipline.—It is pleasing to note that there is a wide appreciation of the importance of method in the instruction. It is frequently overlooked, however, by the younger teachers that true discipline arises from the training and occupation of the pupils, and is a matter almost apart from mere class drill. If the work is planned with due attention to gradation and correlation, and if oral exercises are largely employed, natural interest is aroused in the pupils and easy control is an inevitable result. Although there is need to emphasize the importance of this aspect of school-management, it is satisfactory to note that it is receiving increasingly wide recognition.

We are, &c.,

The Director of Education, Wellington.

A. J. MORTON,
W. A. BALLANTYNE, } Inspectors.

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Wanganui, 31st March, 1917.

We have the honour to present our report for the year ended 31st December, 1916.

Inspection.—At the end of the year there were in operation 220 public schools and private registered schools. Two visits of inspection were paid to all but a few tiny household schools situated in remote parts of the district. We found that a number of schools needed more attention than could be given at the regular visits, but with the present staff of three Inspectors we found it impossible to give them more assistance. The appointment of "organizing teachers" to take charge of groups of country schools, or, under the direction of the Inspectors, to work among the less efficient country schools, would do much to enable us to secure greater efficiency, and release the Senior Inspector for more general organizing work affecting the district as a whole. We do not think it at all economical for an Inspector to spend as much as three days in visiting