

Manual Instruction.—The following table shows in detail the subjects of manual instruction undertaken in recognized school classes, the number of schools represented, and the number of pupils under instruction :—

Subject.	Number of Schools represented.	Number of Pupils.
Agriculture	80	1,513
Botany	2	39
Chemistry	3	120
Cookery and domestic economy	38	1,337
Dressmaking	6	159
Handwork	172	18,962
Laundrywork	15	462
Needlework (sole-teacher schools where special instructress is engaged)	24	311
Physical measurements	13	845
Physical science	1	108
Physiology and first aid	9	540
Swimming and life-saving	19	1,649
Woodwork	43	1,506
Dairy science	1	15

The full rural course was undertaken by 239 pupils at six of the nine district high schools. The Inspectors record satisfactory progress in the teaching of elementary agriculture at the primary school, and the chief instructor finds that the increasing efficiency of the instruction in the primary school is reflected in a rising standard of work by pupils who undertake the rural course. Two district-high-school rural-course pupils have just been awarded an agricultural bursary which entitles them to continue their studies at Lincoln College, Canterbury. The Board considers the Minister has acted wisely in thus providing opportunity for advanced study with a view to the wider application of science to what must always be the leading industry of this country. In order to afford increased assistance in nature-study and elementary agriculture, the Board has lately engaged a third instructor in agriculture, who will spend part of his time in Marlborough.

District High Schools.—The work of the district high schools is fully discussed in the report of the Inspectors. The average attendances for the year 1917 were: Carterton, 43; Eketahuna, 24; Greytown, 12; Hutt, 27; Levin, 43; Masterton, 85; Normal, 21; Pahiatua, 36; Petone, 55: total, 346.

National Scholarships.—There were current at the end of 1917 twenty-nine Senior and thirty-nine Junior Scholarships. On the 31st December, 1917, four Junior Scholarships expired. There were awarded on the results of the November-December examination, 1917, nine Senior and nineteen Junior Scholarships, and, in addition, two Agricultural Bursaries.

Medical Inspection and Physical Instruction.—In relation to medical inspection and physical instruction the Board notes with pleasure—(1.) The appointment of school nurses. (2.) The improvement of the condition of weak and defective children through corrective classes, and the treatment secured by the parent on the recommendation of the Inspector. It appears that 70 per cent. of the reported cases received the treatment required; this percentage may be expected to rise steadily as the benefit to the child is more fully recognized. (3.) The efforts of the Medical Inspector and the school staff to secure the sympathy and co-operation of the parent.

Buildings.—During the year the Seaview School was removed to a position midway between Seaview and Starborough, thus serving the purposes of two districts. Additions were erected at Maranui and Deep Creek; and new buildings, in extension of existing buildings, were provided at Lansdowne (open air), Ohariu, Wadestown, and Pongaroa. Urgent works only have been carried out, but the increase of numbers in the vicinity of the city has been such as to compel the Board either to erect permanent buildings, or additions, or to make temporary arrangements. Increased accommodation is being provided at Levin and Upper Hutt, and a new school is under construction at Seatoun. Tenders have been called for increased accommodation at Island Bay and Maranui, and the plans of the main Normal School block at Kelburn are in preparation. Increased accommodation must be provided in the immediate future at the following schools: Berhampore, Muritai, Eastern Hutt, Masterton West (where a site has been acquired), Lansdowne, Khandallah, and Plimmerton. Many works were again postponed because of the scarcity of labour and material and the consequent high cost. Such as were undertaken were carried out at greatly increased cost. The Board trusts that the Kelburn Normal School will this year reach completion.

Wellington Technical School.—The Board wishes to emphasize the opinion previously expressed that in the interests of healthy boyhood and girlhood and of sound education the present unfavourable conditions of accommodation for students, junior and senior, of the Wellington Technical College should be ended at the earliest possible moment. It earnestly trusts that, as a result of the consideration the matter is now receiving at the hands of the Government, the site universally approved by the people of Wellington may within the next few months be made available for the Technical College.

School Libraries.—A number of subsidies were granted, but Committees generally have not fully availed themselves of the opportunity of providing at small cost interesting and instructive library reading-matter. The City Council has continued its successful and beneficial library scheme, which now embraces twenty-one city and suburban schools. To meet the growing requirements nearly six thousand volumes were procured. The Onslow and Karori Councils arranged with the city for supply to their schools, and the Board notes with pleasure the establishment of a children's library scheme by the Petone Borough Council. Thirty-three School Committees