

regard to these branches of handwork much more remains to be done, especially as the science of home-making and home-keeping is now to figure so largely in the education of our girls, and agriculture is to figure so largely in the education of our boys; yet the Board has felt that the time was not opportune for asking for grants for manual-training buildings, although these are badly needed, especially at some of the district high schools where the rural courses have to be provided for. At Kaikoura a strenuous effort is being made at the present time to raise sufficient funds to provide a memorial training-room. The Department has promised £300, provided half that amount is raised locally. Hokitika is also moving in the matter of providing a more up-to-date manual-training building. Swimming and life-saving as school subjects have also received due attention during the year. Seventy-five classes were carried on, and about three thousand pupils received instruction. As far as possible all operations in connection with handwork classes have been carried out with a minimum waste of time and disorganization of school class-work, and it is hoped that educationally the maximum results have been attained.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF INSTRUCTOR IN AGRICULTURE.

The year 1917 has been marked by a material increase both in interest and progress in the work in agriculture. Of the contributory causes the institution of a system of grading, promise of recognition of the best work by the Board, the issue of a definite scheme, fuller appreciation of the value of the subject, and the McFarlane Shield each played a part in the schools of the northern area. South Canterbury and Westland schools have not yet been graded. The number of primary schools in Canterbury taking agriculture was 207, and the number of scholars receiving instruction 3,846. Early in the year the West Coast was visited, and agricultural instruction initiated into a dozen or more schools there.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTOR.

Seventy-six primary schools in South Canterbury were visited during the year, most of them several times. All were supplied with Southland Up-to-Date seed-potatoes to be tested alongside of local seed. The results I anticipate will confirm those of last year's tests, and probably induce farmers generally to obtain their seed from farther south. I am pleased to report a still spreading interest in our potato-growing competition. Substantial results, from a utility point of view, are now beginning to accrue from our nursery and tree-culture work at the various schools. Some hundreds of trees of leading commercial varieties were distributed to pupils' home gardens. Upwards of 300 were taken from the Timaru Main School alone, while 170 surplus apple and pear stocks from Glen-iti and Southburn school nurseries were used to stock other gardens. One hundred trees from the High School nurseries were planted in school residence gardens. I hope in a season or two to have a good orchard established at all suitable school residences. Throughout South Canterbury generally the gardens give ample evidence of care and attention from both teachers and pupils. In addition to our usual routine work we are making an effort to save mangel, turnip, and carrot seed from selected roots.

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EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS.

To our remarks on handwork last year we have little to add, except to state that we are pleased to record that the number of teachers who look upon the subject as a powerful educational factor and as an aid to instruction in other subjects is increasing, and that fewer are now treating it as an isolated subject in a watertight compartment. The instruction given in woodwork classes held in Dunedin and in the different centres is of a satisfactory character; but at the Dunedin centres the classes are too large, and in order to relieve the congestion the establishment of a third centre is absolutely necessary. In cookery and domestic economy good practical work has been done at all centres, but more theoretical instruction should be given in order to familiarize the pupils with principles.

EXTRACT FROM THE EDUCATION BOARD'S REPORT.

The importance of the school-garden as an educational factor and as a means of bringing the child into sympathy with his environment is now generally recognized. During the past year elementary agricultural instruction has, under the supervision of the Board's instructors in agriculture, been associated with the other subjects of the curriculum in 196 schools, and in many of these very effective work is being done. In six of the district high schools the full rural-science course has been followed. In these schools the permeation of the ordinary subjects with agricultural science paves the way for an intelligent appreciation of the principles upon which the best practice of the art of agriculture is based.

Pupils from thirty-one schools participated in the instruction in swimming, the average attendance being 786 boys and 697 girls. The cost of the classes was £198 17s. 7d., while the amount of Government capitation earned was £187 10s.