

trade training, reinforced by a strong feeling that they have a call to the work of the teacher. Where they are able to commence their teaching as assistants to instructors in charge of large centres, such as those in Auckland and Christchurch, they are at some advantage, but, in any case the new work at its commencement is of the nature of an uphill fight. Practically all of the men teachers have, in addition to their trade qualifications, certain attainments indicated by the possession of such certificates as those awarded to successful candidates at examinations conducted by the City and Guilds of London Institute, but because of the nature of the new regulations of the Home authorities New Zealand candidates can no longer fulfil the requirements for the handicrafts certificate which now takes the place of the former woodwork (or metal-work) teachers' certificate. To meet the situation the Department instituted a Handicraft Teachers' Certificate Examination for candidates in this country. The prescription was as far as possible modelled on that for the Home examination, but in certain particulars the requirements were made somewhat more exacting, with the result that the attainments of the candidate who succeeds in passing the three yearly examinations will be at least equal to those of a primary-school teacher who holds a Class D certificate. The first examination was held in 1925, when two candidates secured a full pass in the first section, and four others a partial pass in this section. At the 1926 examination one candidate passed Section II in full, while, of those who sat for the first section, two secured full passes, one completed the section, and three gained a partial pass. Other instructors, who already hold South Kensington and City and Guilds certificates, are improving their status by taking examinations for the ordinary teachers' D, C, and B certificates. The student-teachership system, whereby young people who propose to take up the work of instruction serve a kind of apprenticeship, devoting part of their time to practical training in the art of teaching at a centre, and part to the prosecution of their studies in the theory of education, as well as continuing at technical classes practical work in connection with their special subject, is not being availed of to any great extent. There were not in 1926 any student teachers for woodwork or metal-work, and only seven were serving under domestic teachers at manual-training centres. The professional and academic standing of the itinerant agricultural instructors may be gauged from the fact that 72 per cent. of their number have either university degrees or such other qualifications as entitle them to be classified in Division I, and that most of the remainder were already experienced in science-teaching at the schools before taking up the special work which now engages their attention.

The issue of the permissive regulation whereby Education Boards, if they so desire, are enabled to hand over to Principals of technical schools and technical high schools the immediate control of manual instruction in their school districts, has not resulted in any noteworthy development in the unification of primary and secondary work in practical subjects; in only three localities has there been a transfer involving centres not directly connected with or immediately adjacent to the technical school concerned. There can be little doubt that the principle underlying the regulation is sound and that if the idea were put into practice universally there would be a distinct gain in improved instruction directed by the experts who, from the nature of things, have in the highest degree the qualifications necessary for the direction of the whole course to the best advantage. As it is, there are only three education districts in which manual-training affairs are under management of supervisors who are able to give a fair measure of attention to them, while in the other districts, where the duty falls to a member of the clerical staff, or perhaps to a senior teacher with his ordinary duties pressing heavily upon him, little beyond routine administration can be accomplished.

There were twenty-five itinerant instructors employed by the Education Boards in supervising and directing the instruction in nature-study, elementary agriculture, dairy science, and general science in the primary and district high schools during the year. These specialists are giving good service to the State. Their schedules of duties differ slightly according to the varying requirements of the Boards and the extent of the ground the instructors must cover in traversing their areas, but in general they are entrusted, under the direction of the senior Inspector of the district, with the guidance of teachers in regard to both the matter to be dealt with and the methods to be employed in carrying out experimental work in the plots, the laboratory, and the class-room. Amongst other duties cheerfully taken up by the agricultural instructors, and performed largely in their own time, is the supervision, in co-operation with officers of the Department of Agriculture and members of farmers' associations, of boys' and girls' club competitions connected with home gardens, crop-growing, and calf-rearing. It is noteworthy, too, that in the course of their visits to different localities they are frequently consulted by parents and by old pupils now engaged in farming pursuits on problems confronting the men on the land in their daily occupation. They have aided greatly in transforming a very large number of bare and, in some cases, neglected school-grounds into places altogether pleasing to the eye, for not only have they given expert advice on this matter to the teachers and children, but they have by personal effort stirred apathetic School Committees into action and worked shoulder to shoulder with them in the effort to brighten the surroundings of the school, and thus create and encourage in the minds of the children love and respect for all that is orderly and beautiful.

The various branches of handwork in the schools are not now taken as separate subjects, the materials and exercises being used as aids in dealing with the ordinary subjects of the curriculum. There is a danger here lest hand-and-eye training, which in itself is so important in the education of the young, should be thrust too far into the background. I am strongly of the opinion that handwork is not carried on with due continuity; it bulks large in the kindergarten, infants', and junior classes, but appears to fall away rapidly in the middle division, and the result is that, as far as any rate as the boys are concerned, there is an undue break between the work of the lower division and that of the manual-training classes. Weakness in this direction seems to be almost universal. The solid training in co-ordinating the operations of hand and eye, in the use of the scale rule, in instrumental drawing, in elementary geometry, and in mensuration, which should be secured by appropriate practice in carton and cardboard work, is on all hands reported to be lacking, and as a consequence boys attending woodwork and metal-work classes must spend some time in making a commencement when they should be merely continuing, for there is no great change in the new occupations beyond the difference in the media.

Inquiries regarding the handwork material, the whole of which is supplied by the Department through the Boards, show that there is little complaint with respect to the quality; the quantity is sometimes said to be insufficient, but in most cases this appears to be the result of errors or omissions in requisition or distribution.