

Complaints are often made that the work of the technical high school is hampered by the fact that the pupils are ill-prepared in arithmetic—that they lack facility in calculations, have an uncertain knowledge of decimals and of the metric system, and have no clear understanding of the meaning of measurement. The remedy would appear to lie in giving more practice in the primary stages to the use of simple measuring-instruments in connection with lessons in subjects such as arithmetic, geography, handwork and drawing, as an exercise in manipulation, and to develop both readiness in the making of calculations and an appreciation of the degree of accuracy to which results may usefully be stated.

The quality of the instruction given in manual-training centres in woodwork, metal-work, and domestic subjects is for the most part satisfactory, many of the specialist teachers in these branches being not only painstaking and thorough but also enthusiastic to a very gratifying degree. The same tendency to cling too closely to stereotyped procedure is the principal weakness observable in the work. The fault does not lie entirely with the teachers, since the classes are generally too large to permit of such modification of the schemes of work as might secure greater development of originality and independence on the part of the pupils. The normal maximum class for practical work of this kind consists of twenty pupils in England, and even this number is considered excessive, whereas in this Dominion twenty-four is ordinarily regarded as a working maximum, but is often exceeded in order to suit the convenience of schools with large classes in Standards V and VI.

The system by which children are drawn together from the schools to a centre for manual training is not by any means ideal, however small the class may be; but there appears to be little hope of every school having its own general workrooms. The transfer of Standards V and VI to post-primary schools, and the application in country districts of the principle of consolidation of Standards V and VI in central district high schools, would appear to afford a possible solution of this problem so far as the work of the manual-training centres is concerned, for each such district high school would require its own workrooms for manual training.

It is interesting to report that an increasing number of children who are backward in the ordinary work of the standards are attending manual-training centres, these pupils being taken from the lower standards or from special classes. They gain considerably from the opportunities for development thus afforded them, but it is felt that closer co-operation is needed between the instructor on the one hand and the class-teacher—particularly the teacher of a special class—on the other, if full benefits are to be secured.

At each of the junior high schools already established the benefits of such consolidation are very obvious, for manual training can be given its rightful place in the general education of the pupils and continued in the higher forms, especially for those whose main interests lie in practical work. There are many indications of a growing desire to give more manual work to secondary pupils, not only in cases where a junior high school has been attached to a secondary school, or replaces a district high school, but also in some cases where an ordinary secondary school is within reach of a manual-training centre.

The following table gives a comparison of domestic subjects courses in four selected schools, which may be regarded as typical. The number of hours per week devoted to each subject in the course is given:—

Subject.	Large Technical School.		Large High School.		Small Technical School.		Small High School.	
	First Year.	Second Year.	First Year.	Second Year.	First Year.	Second Year.	First Year.	Second Year.
English	3*	3*	4.83	5.00	4.25	3.75	4 $\frac{1}{8}$	4 $\frac{1}{4}$
History and Civics	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	2.00	2.00	1.50	1.50	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 $\frac{1}{12}$
Geography	..	..	1.30	1.50	1.50	1.50	1 $\frac{5}{12}$	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
French	..	..	3.75	4.16	..	..	3 $\frac{5}{8}$	4
Arithmetic	3	3	3.60	3.58	4†	3.00	3 $\frac{1}{12}$	2 $\frac{7}{12}$
Home science	..	..	2.25	2.00	2.25	2.25	2	2 $\frac{7}{12}$
Hygiene	1	1	..	..	0.75	0.75	$\frac{2}{3}$	..
First aid and home nursing	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	0.60	..	0.75	0.75	..	1 $\frac{1}{3}$
Cookery	3	3	2.00	2.00	2.25	2.25	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Laundry	..	..	..	..	0.50	..	..	..
Needlecraft	3	3	1.00	1.30	4.50	6.75	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Millinery	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	..	..	1.75	2.50	..	..
Drawing	2	2	1.30	1.50	1.50	1.50	1 $\frac{1}{3}$	1 $\frac{5}{12}$
Applied art	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	..	..	..	..	..	..
Singing	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *	1.00	0.60	0.75	0.75	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{8}$
Physical drill	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2	1

* Elocution takes place of singing and is co-ordinated with English. † Includes book-keeping.

PRIMARY-SCHOOL CLASSES.

Besides the work done in special manual-training classes taught in the manual-training centres by specialist teachers classified under the Regulations for Manual and Technical Instruction, some of the work in the primary schools themselves is supervised by instructors classified under the same regulations.