

little real worth. I have to acknowledge the very valuable assistance and co-operation of the Agricultural Instructors in the North Auckland, Bay of Plenty, and East Coast areas. They showed keen appreciation of the spirit of the revised curriculum and have assisted greatly in its application.

The following extracts are from the annual reports of the Agricultural Instructors:—

East Coast District.

"A new booklet from the Hawke's Bay Education Board was provided during the year. Teachers are urged to show their individual application and interpretation of the lessons. In most schools indoor work reaches a good standard, but pupils can still take a larger share in investigation and simple study. Outdoor work has continued to improve in technique and in routine. Plot studies, by means of such practices as the use of certified potatoes, strain investigations of common crops, have been in line with modern ideas. Careful attention is paid, in most schools, to the growing of foods of dietetic value. A feature of this year was the improvements to the grounds in the smaller and more remote schools. In the larger schools, too, some surprising transformations have been made by the re-organization of playing-areas, entrances, &c. Increase in the number of pupils engaged in calf-rearing was marked. On judging days the adult attendance and local interest were encouraging. Home gardens embrace a wide range of 'crops,' from trees to onions. Housecraft and hygiene have improved where they were related closely to the agricultural and science courses. The daily routine of a well-ordered home offers valuable lessons, but it must be remembered that knowledge alone will not produce action in any branch of science."

North Auckland District.

"Nursery work has received commendable attention, particularly the raising of seedlings for growing in the homes of the children. In this way new vegetables and new farm crops have been introduced, not only to the children but also to the parents. Tree nurseries have been established in thirty-one different schools. In several schools large enough crops have been grown to provide vegetables for soup daily in the winter. Ground-improvement work has been quietly continued, and in many cases very creditable results have been obtained. The improved attention being given to nature study is very gratifying—the immediate environment of the school is replacing text-books as a source of inspiration to teachers, but perhaps the most marked improvement is in the effort to show the children how to find out for themselves instead of cramming them with facts. Definite progress has also been made in club work, particularly in the continuation of home-garden competitions and in the inauguration of junior institutes, Red Cross leagues, calf clubs, a pig club, and a poultry club. In many schools the broadening of the curriculum has been brought about by integrating agriculture, nature study, sewing, cookery, house-craft, handwork, health, and woodwork around the central theme of 'A Happy Home'—this idea has infinite possibilities particularly in making instruction more concrete and in adapting it to the social and economic needs of the district."

Bay of Plenty and Rotorua District.

"Advances have been noticed in the direction of improved correlation between the various branches of the subject as taught in the class-room. In many schools the indoor lessons in agriculture are being framed to study the factors underlying the food-supply of the community and science is introduced incidentally.

"In the school gardens more emphasis is being placed on demonstrations of home-gardening and on local problems connected with farming. The substitution of definite projects undertaken by groups of pupils in place of individual vegetable plots should improve the educational value of the outdoor work."

13. ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION.

Important as are the changes which have been made in the curriculum and aims of Native education, it must be reiterated that they are, and will remain, subsidiary to the main task of the Native primary school. This is to give to the Native children a thorough training and facility in all branches of English, writing, and arithmetic. This training is indispensable for complete living in such a predominantly European environment as New Zealand affords. Teachers were informed that whatever changes were made no diminution in the quality of the instruction in these subjects would be accepted. A high standard of attainment in both oral and written English was the first consideration.

The importance of oral English has now been emphasized for some years, and it is gratifying to note the increase in the number of those schools where the pupils are able to carry on a discourse or debate fluently and confidently. Although grammatical accuracy has improved in narrative speech, in cross-questioning each other and in argument the usual Maori errors break out. A more systematic attack upon these errors is necessary in the form of regular daily drills especially designed to eradicate some particular type of error. Incidental correction is inadequate.

Some improvement has been made in the written English, especially in the writing of letters, but there is need for regular instruction in sentence formation, based on concrete situations. There are still several schools which over-emphasize the value of poetic English in essays, which are consequently characterized by insincerity and inaccuracies. The systematic teaching of an active vocabulary is also a phase of instruction in English which needs attention.