

district where that seemed desirable. Thus it may be asserted that the average club member who rears a calf and tends it throughout a spring and early summer, feeding it, sheltering it, and watching its development day by day, has learned a very great deal about animal nutrition and veterinary hygiene, though those subjects could not possibly appear on the school curriculum; and other children have made the acquaintance of new crops such as sugar-beet or new varieties of familiar plants such as turnips even before their parents have heard much of them. Club work is, in fact, ever presenting new phases illustrating its importance, so that it is no longer possible to define the limits of its functions or to be dogmatic about its aims. In many districts club work is of considerable local importance, and the judging-day, particularly for calves, is a social occasion, attended by large numbers of parents and friends, and associated with exhibits of school-work. It is usual in those districts where calf-rearing is well established to have judges from outside the district, and so great is the interest aroused and so high the quality of the stock shown in these days after several years' experience that men who have officiated at the more important A. and P. Association shows are willing to give their services as judges of the animals brought forward by the children. Their task is no light one when it is realized that on occasions upwards of fifty calves are paraded in one class.

The club movement has decidedly gained favour not only with the children, but also with the adult members of the community. Apart from the obvious merits in regard to the care of animals and the avoidance of disease and the production of better stock, the movement is becoming a social force in the rural community. It is a centre of attraction at the school and at the district meetings; and it is relating in no uncertain way the work of the school to the life of the community, and is giving the school-child who lives in the country a deeper and truer insight into the work that lies always to his hand. Though it alone cannot stem the drift to the town, it should have some direct influence in keeping children willingly in the country by showing them not only what interest there is in growing crops and stock, but also that by the application of knowledge they can grow still better crops and rear more healthy stock. Though the movement is by no means confined to New Zealand, but is a real force in Australia and in America, it is at present one of the few pointers towards the development of a typical national system of rural education in this primary-producing country.

Refresher courses for teachers of agriculture were held at Massey and Lincoln Agricultural Colleges during the August holidays in 1938, and were attended by between sixty and seventy teachers. The courses were enjoyable and extremely valuable not only because of the added knowledge gained by the teachers, who in an intensive course were given the benefit of specialist knowledge of the most recent research in their particular subjects, but because of the stimulating personal contacts made between the college staffs and those teachers who in their own districts are charged to some extent with the duty of disseminating the knowledge painstakingly gathered in the Universities and research institutes. Our thanks are due to the principals and staffs of both colleges for their ready co-operation in a venture which was entirely new, but which, it may be hoped, will be repeated in the near future.

LIBRARIES.

The question of the provision of adequate library facilities is a difficult one, especially in technical schools, where in addition to the normal requirements of a good general library, there is need of a steady supply of expensive technical reference books and periodicals. Few of our schools are provided with adequate library accommodation in which a class may be comfortably seated or in which a large number of books may be conveniently stored; but it is pleasing to be able to record that some progress has been made in the last year or two, both in the direction of improved accommodation and in regard to the supply of books. Where the Board had been prepared to spend money on the purchase of approved reference books on technical subjects, the Department has been able to make a limited further contribution; but Boards have also added numbers of volumes of general literature, and have increased the schools' supply of class-sets, which are of inestimable value in the teaching of English subjects. The problem of an adequate library supply is, however, so great that it is certain that it will never be solved by these means which merely enable the school to brush lightly over the surface of new developments in technique or new spheres of knowledge. There are, however, developments in library methods in this country and overseas which may yet prove to be applicable to our schools when grouped either according to common interests or to geographical proximity.

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE.

During the year the work of the "Youth" centres and of the Vocational Guidance Officers has proceeded steadily, and the organization has been improved in many important details. Reports received regularly from all centres indicate an increasing public interest in the problem of preparing for and finding a life's work for our young people and an increasing measure of success in the efforts of the officers concerned. An outstanding event of the year was the holding of a refresher course for Vocational Guidance Officers at Canterbury College. The course was conducted by Dr. C. E. Beeby, then Director of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, and assistance was given by the Professor and Lecturers in Education of Canterbury College, as well as other qualified persons. The course proved to be most helpful to those taking part in it, and the thanks of the Department are due to those who so ably organized and conducted the course. One outcome was the inauguration of a "Vocational Guidance Association," which aims at keeping its members in touch with all new developments in the technique of vocational and educational guidance.

TRAINING FOR RESERVISTS.

The technical schools were this year called on to provide additional and special courses for reservists in the Territorial Forces. Such courses were conducted at the Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch Technical Schools, and the resources of these schools were somewhat strained to provide the tuition required, and the thanks of both Departments are due to the staffs of those schools which provided courses, sometimes under extremely difficult conditions.