

The Junior Red Cross continued to provide a stimulating and practical channel for health instruction, and the number of Junior Red Cross circles has increased.

In connection with all the work of Native schools under this heading the assistance and co-operation of the Health Department, the Medical Officers of Health, and the district nurses are gratefully acknowledged.

3. ART AND CRAFTS.

In this branch of the Native schools' curriculum considerable progress was made during the year. These subjects are peculiarly apt and suitable for the practice of child-activity and self-expression, and the progressive Native schools are making every use of them. It seems that art and crafts may prove to be one of the most productive channels for the growth of individuality and for the development of the qualities of self-reliance and of independence. While in any of these activities freedom of expression appears to be boundless, it is really severely disciplined by the nature of the tools, materials, and other media employed.

The most surprising results have been obtained in free colour work, usually by means of tempera colours on brown paper. There is no doubt about the quality of much of this work and the enjoyment it gives to the children. The issue of the larger and more manageable brushes and the new tempera colour powders has evidently filled a want. Pastel work varies considerably in quality from school to school, and is a worthy complement to the more vividly-coloured and more quickly-applied paints. Maori design is receiving increased recognition and in a few cases is being applied as a form of decoration to articles of utility. Particularly in the infant room, blackboards are freely used. Occasionally it was found that the children were being restricted to the use of white chalk, but this prohibition of colours was not a common one. The Maori child has a real facility in drawing action pictures of men, horses, aeroplanes, and motor-vehicles. This natural gift will, no doubt, now be exploited to a much greater extent than was the case when the art period was almost entirely devoted to object drawing.

Of the Maori crafts, *taniko* work has proved to be the most popular, and in many schools the girls have mastered this skill. The issue of carving tools in 1937 gave a distinct impetus to Maori carving, but progress is hampered by the lack of some simple handbook which would enable teachers to make themselves conversant with the names and details of the various traditional patterns and designs, and give them instruction in technique. The Education Department hopes to bring out a handbook in the near future. *Tukutuku* work has not proved a suitable craft for school use, and was seldom seen. In a few schools very good work in flax-plaiting was done.

Woodwork has been commented upon in the previous section. In some schools skill in metal-work has reached a high standard, and very useful articles have been made from tins.

The handwork in the infant room is necessarily simple, and consists, for the main part, in scissor and paste work and in the use of the usual departmental handwork supplies.

During the year a number of new woodwork-rooms was erected. At thirty Native schools there are separate buildings for the teaching of this subject. Nine sewing-machines were issued, making the total number of schools equipped with sewing-machines fifty-four.

4. SOCIAL STUDIES.

Geography and history are so intimately related that the study of each is necessary for the complete understanding of the other. In most schools the inter-relation of these two subjects has not been fully appreciated, but it is pleasing to note that during 1938 a fair number of schools successfully adopted programmes combining them in such a way as to permit a better selection in the subject material of their courses. The tremendous scope that these two subjects offer for research and projects has been recognized to a much greater extent. During 1938 the best work was done in local regional surveys in harmony with modern geographical practice in group work, in project work, in the intelligent use of atlases and reference books, in the study of current events, in charts and notice boards, and in collections and museums. In general, local history and geography are insufficiently studied, but the stimulus of the Centennial year should assist greatly in adding interest to this phase of the work. It is felt that the study of these subjects should begin to lay the intellectual foundation of an understanding of society and of the art of living with one's fellows. No more than a beginning should be expected in the primary school, but it is doubtful whether everything possible is being done, even to awaken curiosity regarding the social structure and the rights and duties of its constituent organizations and of the individual.

There is great need for strengthening the teaching of civics in a wide sense. The teachers are realizing that the generation now in their charge must be awakened to an appreciation of the community, of its needs, and of its dependence upon each individual for its continuing welfare and maintenance. It is hoped that no Maori child will leave school without this knowledge.

5. ÆSTHETIC ACTIVITIES.

Although progress can be reported in the æsthetic arts, in too many schools teachers still fail to appreciate and to stress the cultural value of these allied subjects—reading, recitation, music, choral speaking, and dramatic work. Yet in a number of schools these arts are being taught in a very efficient manner, and both children and audience reflect the intense pleasure derived from a vivacious and sympathetic interpretation of music, drama, and poetry. When this spirit of brightness has been attained it permeates the whole curriculum, for the children, conscious of their ability to express themselves fluently and forcefully, and inspired with self-confidence, are able to convert all their work into pleasure, and the school becomes a hive of industry, with the pupils taking a very active part in their own instruction.