

MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION IN THE SEVERAL EDUCATION DISTRICTS.

AUCKLAND.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE EDUCATION BOARD.

Manual and Technical Education.—The report of the Director shows what has been accomplished during the year. Besides the work done in the Auckland Technical School, in the three manual-training schools, and in the special classes held at the Kauaeranga School, Thames, fifty-nine schools have carried on instruction in handwork and sixteen in needlework. Swimming classes have been established in Auckland, and are largely attended by boys and girls of the town and suburban schools.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

Handwork in some form or other is now taken up in a large number of schools, and is generally popular. On the whole it is bringing forth good results. It is especially valuable in the primer classes, where it introduces a pleasant variety of useful employments, and has by its attraction helped to keep up a more regular attendance. The opportunities for language-training that it affords might in these classes often be turned to better account. At the manual-training centres in the city and suburbs of Auckland the pupils have done highly creditable work, as the Director of Technical Education has publicly testified. This performance speaks well for the general training the pupils have received in the schools. Under the advice of Mr. Harry Wallace, the drawing of plain and coloured patterns and designs, many of the latter original, has made very satisfactory progress in the schools he has been able to visit. In many other schools promising work in brush drawing is being carried on, and pupils and teachers alike display considerable enthusiasm for it. It is desirable that brush drawing should be taken up in all schools in which teachers can give competent direction of it, for it imparts a much better training and yields a better means of artistic expression than pencil drawing, while, above all, its practice demands greater honesty and fidelity in the effort put forth by the pupils. Of the many new developments of recent years, this is, in my judgment, the most valuable and the least ephemeral.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

During the past twelve months very considerable progress has been made in this district in manual training and technical education, and it is in a much more optimistic spirit that I pen this report than was the case on a similar occasion a year ago.

Manual Training or Handwork in Primary Schools: Cookery and Woodwork.—The teaching of these subjects has up to the present been confined to the pupils of the higher standards of such of the city and suburban schools of Auckland as are within easy reach of one or other of the three manual-training schools at Newton, Newmarket, and Ponsonby respectively. Excellent work is being done in these schools, and the opposition which was at first manifested by certain parents to their children attending these schools has rapidly disappeared, as they have come to understand that the pupils are not being taught to become "cooks" and "carpenters," but are being trained to habits of neatness, cleanliness, accuracy, resourcefulness, and self-reliance, and that their powers of originality and observation are being developed in a manner that cannot be otherwise than of inestimable value to the formation of character. That the Board is to be congratulated on having obtained from England such excellent teachers for cookery and woodwork is acknowledged on all hands, and it is very satisfactory to know that the Department's Inspectors are constantly advising teachers from other parts of the colony to visit Auckland and see how manual training is being taught there. It is very gratifying to know that both Thames and Whangarei are about to be provided with manual-training schools, in which cookery and woodwork will be taught, and it is to be hoped that ere long the Government will be able to provide similar schools for Waihi, Cambridge, Hamilton, and Northern Wairoa. Some form of handwork, such as brush drawing, plasticine-modelling, paper cutting and folding, cane-weaving, free-arm drawing, &c., is now taught in most of the public schools, as the number of teachers who have received special training for teaching these subjects is rapidly increasing. The Board's art specialist, Mr. Harry Wallace, late Organizing Inspector in Art and Hand-and-eye Work to the Burslem School Board, who arrived in Auckland in March last, has spent a considerable portion of his time in visiting the city and suburban public schools to advise the teachers as to the best methods of teaching the various branches of handwork, and under his guidance excellent progress has been made.

The Training of Teachers in Art, Science, and Handwork.—Classes were held, as in the previous year, in cookery and woodwork at the three manual-training schools, and excellent work was done. Forty-two candidates presented themselves for examination by the City and Guilds of London Institute in woodwork (first year), and of these thirty-five were successful. In cookery, thirty-three out of thirty-six who sat for the London examination passed. The Board also held examinations in July last in the theory and practice of teaching cookery and woodwork respectively, with the result that nineteen out of twenty-four teachers passed in cookery, and twenty-two out of thirty-two in woodwork, the standard required for passing in each subject being a high one. Classes in freehand, model, blackboard, and brush drawing were conducted in the evening and on Saturday by Mr. Harry Wallace, and upwards of two hundred and fifty teachers attended, and splendid progress was made. The Board is to be heartily congratulated on its recognition of the value of art training for teachers in the decision it has made to grant a ten-pound bonus to every teacher that obtains five First-class Advanced Art Certificates from the London Board of Education. Science classes for headmasters and assistant teachers were also conducted by Mr. John Henry, M.A., B.A., B.E., and by myself.