

carefully graded lessons as distinguished from demonstrations on the theory that underlies the practice of the culinary art. Such lessons should include suitable experimental work carried out by the pupils themselves. The course might also well include exercises in practical arithmetic having a direct bearing on the work of the class. It is true that a course that included work of the kind indicated would probably mean a reduction in the number of recipes taught to the children; whether the education of the children would suffer thereby need not be discussed here. The fact remains, however, that instruction in cookery on the lines at present generally in vogue not only in New Zealand but elsewhere is not made as educative as it might be. The causes are not far to seek. One of the most potent has been, we think, the general absence, until quite recently, of facilities for persons undergoing a course of training with the view of qualifying as instructors in cookery to acquire the necessary scientific knowledge without which it would be idle to attempt to carry out experimental work of any value in connection with a course of cookery. It is to be hoped that those responsible for the establishment and conduct of classes for the training of teachers in cookery will be able to see their way to supplement instruction in the practice of cookery by special courses in, say, elementary physics, chemistry, physiology, and hygiene, with the view of removing as far as possible the disabilities that at present exist.

The number of classes for elementary physical measurements increased during the year from sixteen to fifty-nine. This branch of handwork can, if properly treated, be made to serve a very useful purpose as a factor in the all-round education of the child. The subject is one that can be efficiently taught in the ordinary class-room, and that does not call for anything in the way of elaborate equipment or apparatus. It thus affords an excellent opportunity for enabling pupils attending primary schools (in most of which, unfortunately, but unavoidably, there is no provision in the way of laboratories) to gain some knowledge of elementary science at first hand. The subject is admittedly not an easy one to teach, entailing as it does a considerable amount of preparation on the part of the teacher; but we are confident that the results will be found to justify fully time and labour so spent. Speaking generally, good results have been achieved in connection with most of the classes for this subject. It seems necessary, however, to remind teachers that the educational value of the work to the pupils is very often in inverse proportion to the ground covered by them during the year. A few exercises and experiments thoroughly and carefully done will have far better results than a more ambitious course treated, perforce, in a hurried and incomplete manner. The too common mistake of attempting to cover too much ground in the time available for the work is probably due to some extent to the fact that certain of the text-books dealing with physical measurements err in precisely the same direction.

There has been a very considerable increase in the number of classes for instruction in elementary agriculture. Some 250 classes were in operation during the year, as against about a hundred during 1905. Very satisfactory progress is being made in several education districts in connection with arrangements for instruction in primary schools in subjects having a direct bearing on rural occupations. Several controlling authorities have now appointed special instructors, whose duties include, in addition to the training of teachers, the supervision and direction of the pupils' work in nature-study and in connection with school gardens. It is not possible at this stage to form anything like an accurate estimate of the value of the work in the school garden, but it may be said that if in any of the classes for teachers or in any of the classes of our rural schools an interest in "the things around us" has been created—if both teachers and pupils have in any degree learnt to see the things they look at and handle in the classes, and are able to draw true conclusions therefrom—if eye and mind have been trained to see and comprehend some of the facts of life, nothing but good can result from the work not only as regards the individual, but also as regards the general work and the life of the school. In an appendix to this report will be found some extracts from programmes of work drawn up by the special instructors in agriculture in the Auckland, Wellington, and North Canterbury districts, which it is hoped may prove of some assistance to teachers in country schools.

Instruction in dairying has been again confined to one district—namely, Taranaki. There are, however, indications that arrangements will be made during the present year by the Wanganui Education Board for carrying out a fairly comprehensive scheme of instruction in this important subject in connection with the Board's schools. A special instructor has been appointed to organize and supervise the work. The scheme proposed also provides for training classes for teachers, while the establishment of classes, as opportunities offer, for persons engaged in the dairying industry will also be kept in view.

The development of the schemes now being put forward by controlling authorities in several education districts having for their object instruction in subjects having a direct bearing on rural life and industries will be watched with much interest. To commence with the primary schools is, we think, right in principle. Persons who while at school have been familiarised with some at least of the facts of their surroundings should be induced more readily to take up courses of instruction in connection with technical schools and classes than those who have not. The problem of how best to provide later on for more advanced instruction in agricultural science and rural economy for those who are now receiving primary education is now engaging the attention of certain controlling authorities. In this connection we venture to express the opinion that the usefulness of the rural district high schools would be in no way impaired if the curricula thereof were more in keeping with the industries of the districts in which the schools are located.

Speaking generally, the progress of manual instruction, including in that term all the subjects to which reference has been made above, may be described as satisfactory. Handwork is slowly but surely finding its proper place in the system of elementary education. Coincident with a general improvement in methods of instruction is the recognition by an increasing number of teachers of the possibilities of certain forms of handwork—namely, those already referred to as now receiving most attention in the schools—in their relation to other subjects of the public-school syllabus.