

cookery room has been added to the Masterton School, and provision has been made for one at Carterton. One of the rooms of the old Greytown School should also be fitted up for this purpose, and when this is done children from other schools in the Wairarapa might very easily be taken to one of these three centres for lessons. A centre will shortly be established at Levin, and provision should also be made to give the girls at Petone and the Hutt an opportunity of obtaining lessons in cookery.

The Department made grants for the establishment of woodwork centres at Thorndon and South Wellington. An instructor has been appointed, who will shortly be at work. Similar centres should be established in the Wairarapa.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE EDUCATION BOARD'S INSTRUCTOR IN AGRICULTURE.

At the end of 1905 recognised classes in agriculture, combined with cottage-gardening, were being conducted in 15 schools. During the past year the number has increased to 42. At all of these garden-plots have been established, and four—viz., Masterton, Carterton, Greytown, and Mauriceville West—now possess suitable laboratories in which individual experimental work in agricultural chemistry and plant-physiology may be carried out by the pupils. My regular weekly engagements have been—one day at the Wellington Technical School, half a day each at the Carterton and Greytown District High Schools, and, during the last seven months of the year, a teachers' Saturday class in Masterton, and an evening class for adults at Greytown. Seventy visits have also been paid, as opportunity has offered, to other schools at which work is in progress. The instruction has been on the lines laid down for the first year's work in the circular issued by the Board in March last, and has consisted chiefly of practical work in the garden, accompanied by lessons on the chemistry of air and water, as related to the growth and requirements of plant-life, the structure of plants and the duties performed by their various parts, the nature and sources of plant-food, and observations on the weather, including the compilation of meteorological charts and calendars. In some schools, especially those which commenced operations late in the year, little has been accomplished beyond the manual labour of preparing and planting plots—a task, in several instances, of an exceedingly arduous nature. The cheerful manner in which the demands thus made have been met by teachers and pupils alike augurs well for success in the future, when the difficulties inseparable from the initial stages have been overcome. In accordance with the desire of the Board, special attention has been given to the district high schools in the country districts, with a view to making them centres for agricultural instruction. The three principal centres in the Wairarapa are now amply provided with laboratories and outdoor equipment, the grants made by the Department having been liberally supplemented by donations of both land and money from local bodies. The plots at the Masterton District High School supply an excellent example of what may be accomplished by skill and determined effort in the conversion of a stony waste into a smiling garden, and reflect great credit on the efforts of master and pupils; while at Carterton the successful establishment of luxuriant vegetation on a site formerly devoted to the manufacture of bricks is also a pleasing evidence of patience and perseverance. The next important centre to receive attention will be Levin, at which place the laboratory is approaching completion, and it is hoped that within the year circumstances will permit the extension of operations to Pahiatua. A Saturday class for the convenience of teachers in the Wairarapa and Forty-mile Bush districts was commenced in June last, and continued till the end of the year, with a weekly attendance of from thirty to forty. The varied composition of the class, which comprised all grades from headmasters to pupil-teachers, rendered it impossible to go beyond the elementary stages of agricultural chemistry, the more salient features in the structure, growth, and habits of plants, and instruction in the manipulation of apparatus. Individual experimental work formed an important feature of the course, and the interest displayed showed that even the older members, to whom much of the work was necessarily not new, appreciated the opportunity of acquiring the manual dexterity in performing experiments which is so important a part of a teacher's equipment. Lists of the experiments carried out were issued from week to week, and I trust that these, though not intended to serve as a programme of work for school use, may still form a useful source of material to teachers when preparing lessons, besides affording some indication of the class of experimental work desired.

The size of the Masterton class formed a serious obstacle to really effective individual work, and it will be necessary to devise some means of remedying this defect during the present year. One plan suggested is to limit the attendance to those teachers likely to utilise their agricultural knowledge in the immediate future. Another, and one that seems both fair and practicable, is to hold two courses this year—one at Greytown, for the benefit of the district south of Masterton, and another at Pahiatua, which would serve the northern half of the district. This would afford well-earned relief to those teachers who last year sacrificed much time and comfort to attend the Masterton class, and would also reach many who could not be reasonably expected to travel to Masterton. The evening class, held at Greytown once a week since June, has been attended by eighteen adults, whose interest has amply justified its establishment. A portion of the school section has been set aside for the use of members who have, during their spare time, carried out a number of experiments which cannot fail to be instructive to the district at large and to the pupils of the school in particular. It is pleasing to note that the results of agricultural instruction are already visible in some of the fields of the neighbourhood, where the knowledge acquired in the laboratory is being put to a practical test.

While it is yet too early to form an adequate estimate of the advantages to be derived from nature-study in its agricultural aspect, evidence is not wanting to show that, where taken up in the right spirit and with due regard to its relation to the rest of the syllabus, not only need it not prove burdensome to teacher and pupil, but it may become in every way an assistance and a source of inspiration. The lessons to be derived from the garden will naturally vary as the work pro-