

taken up at thirty-four different schools, an increase of five for the year, and every inducement was given to make pupils and teachers take an increased interest in the work. No doubt the instruction given will tend to create among the children a great love for rural life and its activities. There is evidence that School Committees and the public generally are taking more interest in the surroundings of the schools. At some schools sums of money are raised annually for the purpose of helping on the school-gardens. Most of the agricultural and horticultural societies in the district do their best to encourage the growth of flowers amongst the children, and one has only to visit the different shows in the district to see evidence of well-kept gardens and a love of nature. Rural courses of instruction have also been taken in connexion with the Temuka and Pleasant Point District High Schools; fifty-six pupils received instruction in the following subjects: Agricultural botany, agricultural chemistry, agricultural zoology, dairying, surveying, dressmaking, cookery, woodwork, chemistry, and physics. Although the capitation allowed by the Department for school classes does not allow of any margin of profit, a glance at the balance-sheet will show that the classes have been self-supporting, as when all claims have been paid over by the Department there will be a credit balance of about £150 on the technical account. All schools have been liberally supplied with material and apparatus, and, although there has been no stint, there has been no waste. In conclusion, I have to thank all teachers of manual and technical subjects for their loyal co-operation in carrying on the work during the past year. I have also to state that all claims and applications were met by the Department with promptness and fairness.

RICHINGS GRANT, Director.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSTRUCTOR IN AGRICULTURE.

In briefly reviewing the work of the past year I would first like to indicate the nature of the course of agricultural instruction being carried on in the schools of South Canterbury. Hitherto the greatest defect has been a lack of system and uniformity, coupled in many instances with lack of knowledge as to the scope and nature of the work suited to the requirements of the scholar in the primary school. I have looked upon the rectification of this defect as my first duty, and have therefore prepared and placed in the hands of teachers a scheme of nature-study and agricultural instruction so graded through the standard classes that there is neither break nor overlapping, that the work of any one standard follows logically upon the work of the previous standard, while being the necessary groundwork for the work of the next standard, and that there be no break on entering the district-high-school syllabus of instruction which takes the pupil up to matriculation standard. I believe no similar scheme has been prepared elsewhere in New Zealand, and certainly no such graded scheme is in operation. That it is both workable and suitable is vouched for by the teachers themselves. I believe it to be in the best interests of the pupil that all teachers should adopt a uniform course, but the scheme in no way interferes with individuality of treatment. A comprehensive garden calendar suited to this district has also been issued, to assist teachers with their garden-work. All schools earning capitation in gardening have been regularly visited for the purpose of supervision and instruction. Five classes per week have regularly been conducted at both Pleasant Point and at Temuka District High Schools in the following subjects: Agriculture (theoretical and practical), agricultural botany, agricultural chemistry, and dairy science, amounting to about four hundred hours' instruction altogether. Other special subjects of the rural course are agricultural zoology, physics, pure botany, surveying, and woodwork, taken by the school staff and by the woodwork instructor. Pupils have been prepared in agriculture and in dairy science for both Civil Service and Matriculation, and it is satisfactory to note that all were successful in these subjects. The work at Temuka has been of a very high order, and a special word of praise is due both to Mr. McLeod and Mr. Connell for their enthusiastic co-operation. The experimental plots (occupying three-quarters of an acre) have possibly no rival in the district high schools of the Dominion. On my application the Agricultural Department decided to co-operate with us in some of our experiments, and have this year supplied all seed for an extensive series of variety trials. During the winter months a course of eighteen lectures in agriculture was given to a class for teachers, many of whom were desirous of taking the subject for their Class D or Class C examination, while a course of elementary agriculture chemistry was provided to assist such to qualify for the practical certificate. At the Winchester Agricultural and Pastoral Show, and at Pleasant Point, exhibits illustrating the nature of our experimental work at the high schools were staged, and attracted considerable attention. Several lectures on seasonable topics were delivered at meetings of farmers, while a considerable amount of correspondence with farmers and teachers relative to agriculture was undertaken.

A commencement has been made with a scheme of garden-building. Formerly many gardens existed only during half of the year owing to a total lack of perennial plants and shrubs. I have attempted to get teachers to make use of the gardens to beautify the grounds rather than edge the garden in a corner, and to adopt a policy of shrub-planting for a year or two. The real purpose of the garden is, however, to supply the material for nature-study, and to teach elementary notions of tillage and of garden practice, and this on the basis of actual observation. An appeal to observe Arbor Day in a truly practical manner was heartily responded to by the majority of the schools, many of the local Committeemen lending valuable assistance and showing a sympathetic interest in this work. Part of my time has been devoted to the preparation of coloured charts and of material for teaching purposes, and to collecting and mounting collections of weeds, blights, &c. The camera supplied by the Board is destined to be of considerable value, especially in preparing lantern-plates and micro-photographs. Lastly, I wish to acknowledge the courtesy and harmonious co-operation of teachers, Inspectors, and office staff, and to thank the Board for its fairness and ready assistance at all times.