

tion in district high schools has been fully carried out at Temuka and Pleasant Point, the equipment for the course being in every way complete at Temuka, and though not so elaborate at Pleasant Point, being sufficient there also. The scheme has not yet been fully adopted at Waimate; but the course of instruction there, as at the other district high schools, is carried out with vigour and success, the teachers showing enthusiasm and skill, and the scholars evincing a splendid working spirit and a keen desire to take full advantage of continuing their school studies. In the school-grounds at Temuka and at Pleasant Point experimental plots have been laid down under the direction of the agricultural instructor, and for the special purposes of the rural course the gardens at Temuka are deemed by those most capable of judging to be second to none in the Dominion. Owing to the generous assistance of the High School Board of Governors, the secondary department of the Waimate School is much more liberally staffed, and the staff is better paid, than is usual in other district high schools. The high standard of efficiency maintained in the school amply justifies the expenditure.

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In six of our district high schools the rural course is in full operation. The woodwork and cookery rooms and the science laboratories are fully equipped, and ample ground for present experimental needs has been provided. The visiting instructors have carried out their duties with energy and enthusiasm, and the permanent staffs have maintained keen interest in the future prospects of their pupils. Of the instruction we have to report that the science subjects have been very well treated, and, so far as our observation goes, we are of opinion that it is this side of the course that makes the strongest appeal to the pupils. Mathematical work is being well kept up, and, although it is possible that less ground is covered in pure mathematics than was formerly the case, there has been a decided gain in the practical mathematics. Woodwork and cookery have been enthusiastically taken up by the pupils, though in the latter subject we feel that greater attention must be paid to the scientific principles underlying the various processes than they have so far received. With girls in the primary schools we are of opinion that practice is more important than theory; but with high school pupils who are receiving good training in physics and chemistry, the application of scientific principles to cookery can be insisted upon with benefit.

The literary work embraces English, Latin, French, history, and geography. In any high school course the English language and history should form the backbone of the course. Paulsen, the historian of the German high school system, expresses the opinion that "the past records of the life of mankind are better calculated to influence the souls of the young than are the inflexible laws of nature." The information a pupil acquires he must be able to utilize in his relations to his fellow-beings; therefore he must express in appropriate words what he has acquired. Now, power in expression comes through language-study, the power to appreciate what has been said and done by our predecessors; to express simply and directly in our vernacular what we know and what we think is a preliminary to effectiveness in other branches. It is futile to expect this power to develop intuitively; it must be systematically cultivated. France has recognized the necessity for this and has taken steps for the promotion of this power by a series of educational devices that are unique in their completeness and effectiveness. Germany, which formerly leaned towards a *laissez-aller* policy in the matter of instruction in the vernacular, on the assumption that it was an unconscious acquisition which called for no systematic guidance, has completely reversed its policy within the last twenty years, and now makes it the core of its entire educational system, "the aim being to develop gradually in the pupil the power of reproducing in simple and suitable fashion in *free oral* utterance, sound knowledge, and clear views. All teachers must take full advantage of every means that may stimulate the power of expression in speech and writing." The same aim—the advancement of the faculty of expression—should be the aim of our English courses. A rationally directed study of literature expression, both of its best present usage and of its eminent models in prose and poetry, reveals to a student how thought is made intelligible in form, and leads him to develop a natural and effective vehicle for his thoughts. Interpretation of literary masterpieces, formal analysis, grasp of rhetorical devices, are at best only occasional means to this end; the ever-present means is the nexus between the thought and its formulation in definite expression that ought to dominate every lesson on the time-table. It is to the failure on the part of our teachers in both primary and district high schools to realize this that much of the weakness in expression prevalent among our pupils is due. The development of the faculty of expression is the work of every teacher in the school, and to its cultivation every teacher ought hourly and daily to direct his or her efforts.

With regard to the syllabus of instruction laid down for the rural course we have to say that in our opinion it is too heavy and too inelastic. Too many subjects are included at the cost of thoroughness. The educational principle that few subjects thoroughly treated will give better educational training than many subjects treated superficially has, we fear, been overlooked by the compilers of this course. In all our district high schools there are pupils preparing for the various public examinations, and the imposition on these of the rural course is a very serious matter. The successful carrying out of the course depends largely on the amount of capitation that can be earned under the regulations and the tendency is to regard the course as a capitation-earning scheme rather than as an educational scheme. To us it is evident that at no distant date some radical alteration in this respect will have to be made. Meanwhile, we think that in such public departments as those of Lands, Agriculture, Irrigation, Forestry, Dairy, and Stock, preference of employment should be given to pupils who have taken a course of instruction in schools where the rural course has been carried on. This would tend in some measure to place such candidates on an equality with those who, by taking fewer subjects in secondary schools, can make a better appearance in written examinations.