

possible. To this every encouragement is given by educational authorities and medical officers. Lighting is also under the control of the teacher. The class should be so placed as to allow the light to come mainly from the left side, and bright glare or intense heat should be avoided by the use of blinds. Strict attention to the arrangement of desks, distribution of children, and cases of overcrowding is necessary. Where desks are of assorted sizes the child must be placed at the desk best suited to its size and physical condition, not, as is commonly the practice of careless teachers, according to merit. Simplicity of furnishing, avoidance of the accumulation of waste materials and unused articles, and the provision outside the class-room for children's hats, cloaks, lunches, &c., are usually at the discretion of teachers."

Again, the value of careful attention to the ventilation of the schoolroom is forcibly shown by the following experiment made to determine the value of cold fresh air in schools by a medical inspector of the Philadelphia public schools, with the co-operation of teachers and parents: "He opened the windows at the top and bottom, and kept them open throughout the winter. The room was shut off from the heating plant of the building, except on the occasional days when the temperature fell below 45°; but the children, of course, wore extra wraps and had frequent drills and exercises. Week by week during the autumn and winter and spring this physician weighed and examined the pupils, watching their study and their play, and compared their progress in health and scholarship with that of pupils in another room of the same building. In that other room the pupils were of the same grade and of about the same number, but the room was heated and ventilated according to the usual methods. The pupils in both rooms were normal healthy children from the same kind of homes, so that the test was as fair, accurate, and searching as possible. At the end the inspector found that the pupils in the open-window room had gained in weight on an average twice as much as those in the warm-air room. The pupils in the open room kept wholly free from colds, and were much more regular in attendance than the others. They were also more alert, free from day-dreaming, quicker to learn, needed less review work, and were better behaved. In health and happiness, in development both of mind and of body the children of the room with open windows had, it is said, a clear advantage over the others. As a result the School Board, recognizing their value, has authorized the establishment of open-window classes in several other Philadelphia schools."

In this connection we would suggest that more advantage should be taken of open-air teaching, which we are strongly convinced conduces to the vigour and healthfulness of the children. In a fair number of schools the shelter-sheds are occasionally utilized for this purpose. We feel that this practice could be greatly extended by taking certain classes entirely in the open air, especially for such lessons as reading and recitation, that lend themselves to this treatment. For some lessons all of the classes might be taught in the sunshine, and an opportunity thereby given of flushing the empty room with fresh air.

General Efficiency.—Each of the schools has been visited twice during the year, and it is again our pleasing duty to record that the teachers have discharged their duties in a conscientious and efficient manner. Generally speaking, the teachers have earnestly endeavoured to remedy the defects referred to in previous reports. During the year the new syllabus came into force, but to enable teachers to thoroughly grasp the altered conditions we were not too exacting in our requirements. Science, for instance, is a subject that we feel merits more thorough treatment. The suggested schemes of science as laid down in the syllabus should be of great assistance to teachers. In order to treat this subject as fully as it deserves it would be advisable for teachers to draw up at least a three-years course of work. In this connexion it should be noted that some home science is now compulsory for the girls of Standards V and VI in every school.

Drawing is another subject that suffers from the want of systematic and intelligent treatment. As mentioned last year, we should like to see a considerable advance in scale, design, and instrumental drawing. To meet the requirements of the proficiency and free-place examinations the instruction in this subject should be more in harmony with the course prescribed in the syllabus. The Education Department issues yearly and supplies to the Board bound copies of the papers set for the November and December examinations. Every teacher should see that his school is provided with a copy of these papers.

We have, &c.,

W. A. BALLANTYNE, B.A.,
R. G. WHETTER, M.A., } Inspectors.

The Chairman, Taranaki Education Board.

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Education Office, Wanganui, 12th February, 1915.

We have the honour to present our report for the year ended 31st December, 1914.

At the outset we desire to put on record our profound regret at the death of our chief and colleague, Mr. G. D. Braik, who for nine years so ably directed the educational affairs of the district. The Dominion could ill spare such an indefatigable worker and widely read educationist. To ourselves he was ever a faithful ally and stimulating coadjutor.

As far as the primary schools are concerned our records show that 1914 was for the teachers a year of struggle to master the intricacies of the new syllabus. Early in the year the Inspectors after much deliberation issued two leaflets—one aiming to give teachers assistance in understanding the general trend of the changes in the syllabus, and the other stating the position we took up with respect to the various branches of handwork and drawing. We were glad to find the majority of our teachers cheerfully accepting the changed view-point and adapting their teaching to the new requirements. Fortunately, with respect to such matters as the close association of instrumental drawing with constructive work in wood or cardboard, the correlation