

No. 2. EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS, DIRECTORS
AND SUPERVISORS OF MANUAL INSTRUCTION, ETC.

[For Reports on Rural Courses in District High Schools see E.-6, Report on Secondary Education.]

AUCKLAND.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE SUPERVISOR OF MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

School Cookery and Woodwork.—The year 1917 shows a still further advance in these branches of training, and two new centres have been opened at Matamata and Te Kuiti. Manual-training classes are now being conducted at Cambridge, Dargaville, Devonport, Hamilton, Helensville, Matamata, Tauranga, Newmarket, Newton, Otahuhu, Ponsonby, Pukekohe, Te Aroha, Te Kopuru, Te Kuiti, Thames, Waihi, and Whangarei, and it is probable that during the forthcoming year several new centres will be established. Difficulty is still being experienced in procuring suitable equipment, owing to scarcity of supplies and prohibitive prices, but this is being overcome in a measure by sixty hours' instruction being given at some of the smaller centres for a period of three months of the year, and the transfer of the equipment to another centre. Although this measure may not be all that could be desired, it is certain that the intensified training for even a short period is of great benefit to the children, and more especially to those of the secondary department of a district high school who are taking the rural course.

Elementary Agriculture and Dairy Science and School Gardening.—During the year 221 public schools and ten Native schools applied for recognition in agriculture, and ninety-one in agriculture and dairy science combined, whilst four schools took dairy science only. Nearly all these schools were visited from time to time by one of the instructors in agriculture. It is proposed during the forthcoming year to hold special classes for primary-school teachers in the "best methods of teaching agriculture," and the outcome it is hoped will be to raise the standard of teaching the subject and at the same time create that enthusiasm amongst the teachers which the subject rightfully deserves. Interest in school agriculture and dairy science was last year stimulated by competitions instituted specially for school-children by the various agricultural and pastoral associations at their shows, and the Education Board contributed towards the prize-moneys for these competitions.

Swimming and Life-saving.—Thirty-seven schools were recognized for this subject, an increase of seven on the year 1916. Where facilities exist more attention might be given to this subject.

TARANAKI.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

Woodwork and Cookery.—Classes for instruction in these subjects were held at New Plymouth, Hawera, Eltham, Stratford, and Inglewood. Pupils of Standards V and VI from the schools in and adjacent to these centres attended the classes. Arrangements were practically completed for the introduction of a scheme whereby an itinerant woodwork instructor will visit various country centres in South Taranaki. It is intended to utilize the shelter-sheds of the various schools, which will be fitted with a specially designed bench. This system has been made possible by the financial assistance guaranteed from the following School Committees, viz.: Pihana, Manaia, Kapuni, Kaponga, and Mangatoki. At Waitara also the citizens have shown a most commendable and progressive spirit, inasmuch as they have subscribed half the cost of a building wherein cookery and woodwork may be taught; thus obviating the necessity of the Waitara children coming to New Plymouth. The Department has granted the remainder of the money, and classes will be opened with the new year.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE.

Some 110 schools took agriculture or dairy-work, or both, making an increased number of fifty-odd on the previous year. The majority of schools were visited four or five times in the year, and several much more frequently. The system of repeated short visits again has been proved to be of special value in keeping constantly in touch with the teachers and pupils. While the year's work has been satisfactory, still, owing to bad weather and to some considerable extent to staff changes, not so many visits have been made as was intended. A beginning has been made in the direction of establishing centres of propagation whence trees, shrubs, &c., of rapid increase can be sent for propagation and subsequent distribution to surrounding schools. New Plymouth Central and Stratford Schools will take a leading place in this work. Owing to the kindness of the Agricultural Department all schools taking agriculture were supplied with seed of lucerne for sowing in November and December, and it is hoped that as a consequence each child in our district will be more or less familiar in future with that valuable fodder plant. In South Taranaki particularly it is being successfully grown over an increasingly wide area, and this to some considerable extent is due to propaganda work at our school and farmers' classes in past years. An effort has been made to correlate the farm and school plot work in country districts, and also to link more closely the subject of nature-study in the lower classes with that of agriculture and dairy-work in the higher.