

the syllabus might be brought into closer conformity with the requirements of the child's everyday life, and feel that, especially in regard to girls, the practical utility of some of the rules should be considered by the Department. Mental arithmetic has shown a steady improvement, though attention to short methods and ready processes of reckoning is still desirable.

In drawing the teachers have done exceedingly well, and the work presented is of a very high order of merit. The course as arranged by us to aid the teachers in interpreting the syllabus has been almost unanimously adopted, and we can fairly say that it has enabled them to decide more definitely what should constitute a scheme in drawing and handwork for their particular schools.

Science in this district is, especially in the county schools, largely concerned with elementary practical agriculture and dairy work, while chemistry and physical measurements form the groundwork in the town schools. The Board has made a liberal grant of chemical appliances to all schools where chemical science is taken. Refresher courses in science have been held throughout the district, and we think the results have justified the institution of these classes.

Singing shows a fair amount of progress, but there is much yet to be done before this subject can be regarded as entirely satisfactory. We contemplate arranging a scheme in theoretical and practical work and offering it as a suggestion to the teachers. There seems to be insufficient time devoted to the subject, and in very few schools is the practice followed of having a short period of singing at various intervals during the day. Our observations show that teachers who attended the singing classes formed last year derived much benefit therefrom, and found indeed that the training and experience gained therein was of quite as much practical value to them as the course they had followed at the training college.

In sewing very good work was presented in most of the schools, while the woodwork is generally of a very satisfactory character.

The Montessori class established at Napier West has continued to function. From time to time our infant mistresses and junior staff are given opportunity to visit the room and observe developments. Insufficiency of accommodation has been a drawback and has hampered progress.

*Schemes of Work.*—We intend during 1920 to make a special investigation of schemes of work in order to secure the most effective form for sole-charge schools and to see that in the larger schools there is in all cases a proper correlation from standard to standard. During the past two years the Board has issued schemes in English, science, drawing, and handwork, and suggestions have been given for schemes in spelling, history, and singing.

*Pupil-teachers and Probationers.*—We have insisted upon pupil-teachers receiving regular practice in teaching, and in accordance with the provisions of the regulations have inspected their work by means of a special lesson on the occasion of our visit to the school. Their notebooks show that they have been required to prepare their lessons in a careful manner, and the criticisms of the head teachers and assistants are in cases of very considerable value. We were much impressed with the personnel of the junior staff in this district, and consider that they are very desirable candidates for the teaching profession. We are glad to know that our good opinion of the training which they are receiving is shared by the authorities of the Department.

*Medical Inspection.*—During the year three Medical Inspectors have been appointed in Hawke's Bay, and at the time of writing we understand that another change has to be made. With so many changes there can be no continuity of the work, as it is impossible for each succeeding officer to commence exactly where his predecessor left off. Each appointment, therefore, means a beginning *de novo*, and any co-operation of teachers is impossible. In order to get satisfactory results we consider it is imperative that a Medical Inspector of Schools should be at least three years in the district.

In a similar way the work of physical instruction has been largely broken into by changes in the staff, and there are indications that some teachers themselves have lost interest. Reference to the Medical Inspector's reports will show that in spite of provision in the regulations no physical instruction had been given in some schools for months. Saturday classes which were established under one instructor for the training of pupil-teachers had to be given up later on. Under these conditions it is impossible to frame at the beginning of the year the programme to be put into effect during the whole course of the year, and we feel that in consequence the work is, in too many instances, lagging behind.

*Swimming and Life-saving.*—During the hottest weather in the early part of the year we arranged to forego physical instruction in favour of swimming and life-saving. Classes in these subjects were held in Napier and Hastings with satisfactory results. In order to stimulate interest in swimming, the members of the Board have provided a challenge cup for competition among the schools. We think that the importance of this subject warrants a greater amount of attention from teachers in the district, and would be glad to have their co-operation.

*Organizing Teachers.*—During the year three organizing teachers were appointed, one being placed in the northern part of the district, working with Gisborne as a centre, one in the middle region with Napier as a centre, and the other in the south with Dannevirke as a centre. Although only a comparatively short time has elapsed since their appointment, much benefit has been derived from their assistance by the teachers of the small schools, and we therefore appreciate very highly indeed the action of the Department in making so valuable an addition to our teaching staff. The great drawback to the small country school consists in the frequent change of teacher. In one case we had as many as eight changes within the twelve months. We think that a teacher who has been visited by the organizing teacher should, generally, not be transferred for at least a year. The varying conditions, however, make it impossible to lay down a hard-and-fast rule.

The result is that the weakest part of the teaching staff is to be found in the small country schools referred to. The young teacher who returns from the training college is very loth indeed to accept appointment to a school even a few miles from home, and prefers to seek a position in other districts rather than accept a country school. There is a good deal to be said for them, as the accommodation provided is not always of a suitable character. The Department should endeavour to formulate a plan by which adequate accommodation will be available. In the case of one school we suggested that a small movable building containing a sitting-room and a bedroom should be provided, to be erected near the residence of the Chairman or other member of the Committee. A young teacher could arrange to have meals prepared and still would have the privacy of her own little home at the end of the day.