

satisfactory only, but the experience gained by the boys in the care and use of tools is most valuable. The number of schools that make provision for cookery instruction is increasing, although practical work has to be carried out in the residence and involves the use of the teacher's apparatus and range. The instruction so given is invaluable, and will be one of the chief benefits derived by the girl from her school life. This course usually includes a certain amount of Hygiene and Housecraft. An inquiry into the suitability of the schemes in Sewing and Needlework indicates that in most schools, owing to the difficulty of obtaining suitable material, the courses are unplanned and ungraded. In some schools, however, particularly good work is done. Drawing is one of the weakest subjects, and special attention will be given to it next year. As this form of expression is natural to the Maori child, it is surprising that better results have not been obtained. As was indicated in the report of last year, the weakness is due to the fact that much of the instruction is unorganized and unrelated to any planned course of treatment.

12. AGRICULTURE AND NATURE-STUDY.

Agriculture is assuming a position of major importance in the curriculum of Native schools not only for its own intrinsic value, but also for the opportunity it affords to draw school and community more closely together. It is pleasing to be able to report that during 1932 a decided advance in the value of the instruction given can be recorded. For this, much of the credit must be given to the agricultural instructors of the Auckland and Hawke's Bay Education Boards, who have stimulated the teaching of this subject by their enthusiasm and knowledge. The activities included in agriculture are many, including indoor experimental work and note-taking, the keeping of garden diaries, school plots, home plots, calf clubs, tree propagation, and experimental plot work of value to the farming practice of the district. Nature-study in the primers and in the lower standards is a fairly widely generalized inquiry into the whole environment, and includes much comparison and contrasting of objects, plants, and animals. There is still a tendency for the accumulation of facts to be regarded as the aim of nature-study. In Standards III and IV, while the chief endeavours continue to be the exploiting of curiosity and a fostering of an attitude of observational alertness, the course is more definite, and preparatory to the more purely scientific instruction given in Forms I and II. The following extracts are from the annual reports of the agricultural instructors:—

East Coast.

"The standard of plot and routine work in the school grounds has improved. There is also a realization of the value of school agriculture as a means of demonstrating scientific and agricultural information and practices as in the establishment of lucerne plots and the growing of onions."

"Records of indoor and outdoor topics by all pupils in Standards III and IV and Forms I and II are more complete. In the larger schools co-operation between farm and school has been organized, resulting in an intimate study of routine work."

"Local interest has been aroused to a considerable extent in the main-crop studies."

"Tree-planting, including forestry, has progressed."

North Auckland.

Indoor Work.—"The methods of teaching continue to improve, but the standard of work in notebooks has not made the improvement expected. In Standards I and II, and particularly in the primers, the nature-study work is on the whole disappointing. In a few schools admirable attention has been given to project work, the progress of which is recorded in home-made folios or on wall charts."

Outdoor Work.—"The season was an excellent one for growth and in some cases outstanding results were obtained. The stoppage of seed-supplies has tended to stimulate saving, and some schools are doing excellent work in this direction. An increased number of Native schools are raising seedlings and root cuttings for distribution, together with seed, in the settlement. In some districts this is reflected in the improved appearance of the children's homes."

"Tree nurseries have been established in fourteen schools. Nine Native schools conducted home-garden competitions. In a few schools sufficient vegetables were grown at the school to provide a hot meal for the children throughout the winter months."

"With a few outstanding exceptions the progress made in ground improvement last year was not as good as expected."

13. ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION.

The improvement of class-room instruction, due to better methods of teaching and to limited but definite objectives in a number of subjects, was a characteristic of the work of Native schools during 1932. As in past years, the teaching of English has been emphasized as of most importance. The children now express themselves orally in their adopted language with much greater freedom and facility. Written composition has not kept pace with the improvement in oral English, but special thought has been given to the improvement of methods which will be used in overcoming the language difficulties peculiar to the Maori. No doubt much consolidation work has been done, the result of which should become apparent next year. The instruction in formal English could be more thorough. Within the limits of the children's vocabularies, spelling is good. Teachers have been asked to prepare special schemes on vocabulary enlargement. Owing to the fact that only a small vocabulary is necessary to meet the requirements of the Maori's limited environment, the formulation of a scheme that will prove interesting to the child and stimulate him to make a special study of words and their uses is a matter of great difficulty. Both oral and silent reading are steadily becoming more proficient. Reference has already been made to the special plans for library enlargement. The attention given to the first year has eliminated a source of considerable retardation, and it can confidently be asserted