

syllabus has entailed a large amount of extra work on country teachers—work willingly undertaken. In the preliminary work of breaking in the ground for school gardens, many Committees have rendered invaluable assistance, and we bespeak their further sympathy with the teacher in looking not merely for the husbandman's return of fat crops, but for a return measured only by the larger interests and wider sympathies of the children. We trust that as teachers become accustomed to the school garden and its bearing on school-work, the "craft and crop" aspect will not obscure the other and no less important side of this work—viz., its bearing on the mental and moral development of the scholar. To quote Mr. Davies again, "A matter not entirely foreign to the subject under notice is the care and beautifying of school grounds. Indeed, in America, a country which is generally credited with being beyond all else practical and utilitarian, this feature occupies a leading place in the rural education programme. Is it too much to hope that, as one of the results of nature-study, the school may become a source of pride and inspiration to the district?" We are in entire accord with Mr. Davies in this matter, and we can assure teachers that both sympathy and practical assistance will not be wanting in any attempt to further so entirely praiseworthy an object. We are, moreover, the more inclined to give prominence to this subject, as during the past year we have been compelled to report in strong terms on the unsatisfactory condition of certain school grounds and offices. During the year instruction in elementary agriculture was provided for such teachers as could arrange to attend at Greytown from April to June, Masterton from July to October, and at Levin during November and December. A similar class at Pahiatua was arranged for, but had to be abandoned owing to the indisposition of the instructor Mr. Davies. The obvious difficulties in the way of making a Saturday class successful in such a subject as agriculture and the excessive demands made on the time of the teachers attending, have induced the Board to adopt this year a system of arranging for a limited number of selected teachers to go into residence at Greytown for a fortnight at a time.

During the year 116 schools earned capitation under the Manual and Technical Regulations. Nearly all the subjects of manual instruction set down for classes below S5 were represented, and grants were also earned for such science subjects as agriculture, chemistry, physical measurements, botany, physiology, and "first aid," and also for dressmaking, cookery, woodwork, dairying, swimming and life-saving.

We are well satisfied with the work done in all these classes, and our opinion has been confirmed by the Department's Technical Inspector, who gave a very satisfactory report on the classes visited by him during the year. Manual work in our schools is improving year by year, but while many of our teachers now realise its proper place in the curriculum, there is certainly evidence that these subjects "have been pushed so hard as to defeat the purpose of scientific education by depriving the pupils of their necessary training in other subjects, and especially in the power of expression in their own language," and we desire to repeat the warning we have given in previous reports, that, while "sense-perception and practical work should have a place in any curriculum, that place should not be an exaggerated one." Mr. Howe, who was appointed instructor in woodwork, opened his classes at Thorndon in June, and another centre was opened in Constable Street. A very satisfactory programme was drawn up, and the boys showed great interest and made good progress in the work. As the programme provides for instruction in drawing, we look forward to a great improvement in those branches of this subject, which include geometrical and scale drawing. The addition of cookery and woodwork to the subjects of the teachers' examination should give some encouragement to work of this class. Saturday classes for teachers have been established in cookery at Wellington and Masterton, and in drawing and handwork (including woodwork) at Wellington.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE EDUCATION BOARD'S INSTRUCTOR IN AGRICULTURE.

Special Saturday classes in elementary agriculture for teachers were held at Greytown from April to June, and at Masterton from July to September, during the year 1907. The classes at each place were attended by sixteen teachers, the average attendance at Greytown being eleven, and at Masterton ten. The course at Greytown dealt chiefly with plant-physiology, and included lectures and a series of experiments on leaves, stems, roots, flowers, fruits, and seeds; while at Masterton, in addition to similar laboratory practice, the programme provided talks on rocks and their constituent minerals, and the formation and nature of soil, with appropriate practical work. Good results were achieved by those able to attend regularly, but several wet Saturdays interfered considerably with the progress of the work at both these centres. An evening technical class in elementary agriculture was also held weekly at Greytown from April to July, 1907. The average roll-number of the class was fifteen, and the average attendance twelve, several losses being sustained during the session through the departure of members of the class from the district. The programme of work consisted of a brief revision of the course in elementary chemistry carried out during the previous year, followed by lectures and laboratory exercises dealing with soils and manures.

W. C. DAVIES.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE CARTERTON TECHNICAL CLASSES.

Classes were held in English and arithmetic, shorthand and commercial subjects, including book-keeping, *précis*, correspondence, and commercial arithmetic. The shorthand class was carried on for two terms, and the others for three. The year was commenced with a much-improved attendance, but there was the usual falling-off towards the end. The average attendance was as follows: English and arithmetic, 8; shorthand, 5; commercial subjects, 6. As these numbers were not sufficient to earn capitation for the payment of the instructors, the Committee's surplus funds were almost completely used up, and it will be impossible to continue the classes for another year without a large increase in the number of pupils.