

the physical education of our boys and girls, and, as with singing, it is recommended that in each of the five education districts an expert in physical instruction be appointed whose duty it would be to superintend the carrying-out of a course of study in this subject approved by the Council of Education.

13. *Moral Instruction*.—Ample opportunities are provided in the list of subjects suggested in the syllabus under this head, and if teachers will only realize that “The purpose of education is to give to the body and the soul all the beauty and all the perfection of which they are capable,” time will be found for giving earnest attention to this subject, and character-building will be regarded as the goal to which all educational effort must be directed. In order to help teachers in this part of their work, the Commission strongly recommends that the series of books, “The Children’s Book of Moral Lessons,” by F. J. Gould, should be placed on the shelves of every school library.

14. *Nature Study*.—During the past few years much has been done in the way of introducing this subject as an integral part of our primary-school course, but much still remains to be done. Nature study should hold an important place on the time-table of every school. From informal chats in the infant department on the animals and plants of a district, on simple natural phenomena, and the telling of nature stories, there should be developed a definite course of lessons for the standard classes, leading naturally to the study of elementary experimental science in Standards V and VI. Everything should be done to create and foster in the child a real living interest in his natural environment, and to turn his attention to the land and its products. Wherever possible, in town or country, gardens should be attached to every school. Nature knowledge acquired in the primary school should lead to the study of elementary agriculture as taught in the rural courses of the district high schools, and so on to the more advanced work of the agricultural colleges. In teachers’ training colleges all students should take a course of study in nature knowledge, men taking more advanced work, while women should devote part of their time to domestic science.

15. *Handwork*.—The degree of interest taken in this subject varies very much in different districts. According to the departmental report for 1911, only 22 per cent. of the schools in the Grey District took any course in handwork, while in Southland 98 per cent. of the schools claimed capitation for the teaching of some branch of this work. In some districts it was ascertained that in order to attend cookery and woodwork centres, children and teachers were obliged to travel long distances by train or coach, and that in some cases they were away from their homes for twelve or thirteen hours in a day. Your Commissioners were impressed with the fact that while so many men and women on the staffs of our primary schools have qualified by examination as teachers of woodwork or cookery, only in rare cases have their services been utilized. Where provision is not made for the teaching of woodwork or cookery in their own school, it is recommended that children should not be required to travel distances necessitating absence from their homes for more than six hours in a day.

16. *Lessons in Health*.—The list of subjects in the present syllabus seems sufficient, but it is suggested that on every school time-table “Lessons on Health” should find a place, and that Inspectors should be directed to see that the lessons are really given, and that the children have profited by them. It is further suggested that in reference to temperance, the following subjects be added to the list: “Alcoholic beverages and their action on the body; moral evils of intemperance; what intemperance costs.” Your Commissioners are pleased to know that the Government have recognized the great importance of attention to health generally by making provision for the medical inspection of school-children. It is further recommended that at each of the four training colleges arrangements be made for the giving by qualified dentists of courses of lectures on the proper care of the teeth. Record-cards of physical development should be kept in every school.

Boards of Education should be enabled to insist on medical and dental attendance where necessary; to pay for the attendance where the parents cannot do so; and to compel payment where they will not.

In recasting the syllabus it is recommended that the requirements should be set out in as simple a form as possible; that the course of study prescribed for country