

course in preference to the agricultural course. To counteract this and to provide a means of training assistants in scientific and practical agriculture the new departure has been inaugurated. One reason why the agricultural course should be popularized is that one if not two agricultural colleges will be established in New Zealand in the near future; but before that is done there will have to be some certainty that the necessary number of students will be forthcoming. To ensure that, it is desirable that the State should establish a sub-department of agricultural instruction, which could be in charge of a first-class expert, working in conjunction with the Education Boards. More liberal provision should be made for the cost of working the system, without entailing extravagance, and then it would be found that agricultural high schools and agricultural colleges would be a necessity. A tribute to the training given in our district high schools has recently been received from Hawkesbury Agricultural College, N.S.W., where several of our lads are studying after having gone through the local scientific and practical course, while the unfailing success of our students who have taken agricultural subjects in the Public Service Examinations is another proof of efficiency. The school farm of 5 acres loaned by Sir James Wilson at Marton has been successfully carried on, and there are some fifty students in attendance there weekly. During the year wheat was sown on $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land and 80 bushels of firsts were obtained. In Feilding Mr. J. G. Cobbe has given the Board the use of 8 acres of land for the forty students at the Feilding District High School. Very successful farm camps were held on Mr. E. Short's Parorangi Estate, his magnificent Romney sheep, Hereford cattle, and Shire horses being placed at the students' disposal, and his expert employees were deputed to assist in the work of instruction. At Messrs. Henson Brothers' farm, Waitohi, the shearing-camp was held, with Mr. Hambly as special instructor in shearing, wool-classing, baling, &c. Messrs. O. A. Banner and J. Grant, agricultural instructors, had charge of the camp, and Mr. J. Bull, woodwork instructor, gave the lads instruction in fencing. The behaviour and health of the lads were uniformly good, and their aptitude for acquiring knowledge was commendable. Other practical work carried out was fruit-tree pruning and spraying and rose-budding—in each case on a commercial scale. In the northern part of the district Mr. Braik inaugurated a system of instruction in pastures for adult farmers, and Mr. R. Browne was placed at their disposal. In addition to his lectures and experiments, a number of farms were given into his charge to prescribe subdivision, treatment of pastures, &c., and in every case the capacity of the farms has been more than doubled, while the cost of treatment—top dressing, &c.—has been reduced. It is proposed to extend this system to the southern end of the district, and particularly on the pastures of districts, formerly bush-clad, which are showing signs of exhaustion. The Board also has in contemplation the creation of an agricultural instruction centre on the Main Trunk Railway portion of the district with Ohakune as the centre. The area of good land available between the line and the Wanganui River is enormous, and there are at least 300,000 acres available for high development, and untouched by special treatment. The success of the system of instructing the pupils is bound up to a considerable extent with the working of adult farmers, and the members of the Board believe they are "making good" in this departure from what is being done in other districts. For the success already attained the Board has to thank many individual farmers and their associations, local bodies, and large-hearted residents, the capable corps of instructors, and the keenness of a large number of students.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS.

With regard to handwork, though some schools are still shirking their responsibility in the matter, we found most teachers readily adapting their programmes of work to the new requirement—namely, the close association of drawing and handwork. In some schools paper-folding was, from the above standpoint, being taught very effectively. Modelling in cardboard or carton did not progress quite as satisfactorily; material was for some time wanting, and the requirements of the syllabus are not as easy to meet as in the case of paper-folding. In cookery and woodwork the reports of the instructors were on the whole very satisfactory indeed, and the pupils' work that we examined showed that these branches are being efficiently taught.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY TO THE EDUCATION BOARD.

It was Mr. Braik's custom, as Director of Technical Education, to write an annual report on manual and technical instruction in the district. Owing to Mr. Braik's illness towards the end of the year, and his subsequent death, his report for last year was not written. I have therefore compiled a brief report which, with the accompanying reports from supervisors and instructors, will, I trust, convey to the members of the Board some indication of the state of technical education in our district at the close of the year.

During the year Mr. J. H. Bull, of Hawkesbury Agricultural College, replaced Mr. Anker as instructor in woodwork in the Central District. Mr. Bull has proved himself an energetic and capable instructor. At the Wanganui Technical College Mr. C. T. Cox, who had been in charge of the commercial department for some years, resigned, and Mr. H. Burdekin, of the Wellington Technical College, was appointed to the vacancy. Miss Smith was appointed instructress in dressmaking in place of Mrs. Taggart, who resigned. Mr. W. Andrews, who successfully conducted classes in applied art throughout the district for a number of years, left to take up an appointment on the staff of the "Elam" School of Art. Mr. F. Tarrant carried on the classes until the end of the year. Mr. E. P. Gibson, an ex-pupil of the College who spent some years in England and on the Continent specializing in this work, has been appointed, and recently took up his duties. Mr. J. E. Richardson, art instructor in the Northern District, joined the staff of the Napier Technical College. The organization of the district remains practically the same as at the end of 1913.

The number of centres at which technical and continuation classes were being held at the close of the year was forty, being an increase of twelve compared with 1913. There were 5,336 enrolments,