

*Elementary Science.*—In the city and suburban schools elementary science is taken in some form by all pupils. Nature-study, chemistry, physiology and first aid, and physical measurements are taught with satisfactory results. As far as is compatible with the circumstances of the schools, observation and practice are made prominent features of the work.

In the rural schools elementary agriculture correlated with nature study (and in a few cases with botany) is the form of science adopted. We are able to report general progress with regard both to the increase in the number of schools taking the subject and to the improvement in the efficiency of the work done. We find that both teachers and pupils take a lively interest in the garden-work, and in many schools we are glad to record that this interest is finding an outlet in the beautifying of the school-grounds. We find also that as the outdoor work increases in efficiency the indoor work is becoming more closely correlated with it. Mr. Cumming, Chief Agricultural Instructor, says in his annual report, "The work in elementary agriculture in the country schools, taken all round, is very satisfactory indeed. . . . This is shown in the attitude of the children to general nature-study, the increased interest in the surroundings of the school, and to some extent by records of work and by the way the country scholars take to and apprehend the work in the science classes at the district high schools." Mr. Cumming emphasizes the benefit accruing from the attendance of teachers at the spring schools, an opinion in which we quite concur.

*Physical Instruction.*—Physical training is carried on in all schools in accordance with the instructions laid down by the Education Department. The tables of exercises have been followed, and progress has been made in the general character of the instruction. A lack of spirit in the work—probably due to a too close adherence for a considerable time to one or two tables—is noticeable here and there, but in general the teachers are enthusiastic, and the directions given by the physical instructors have been faithfully carried out. In too many cases there is a tendency to allow the physical training to end with the daily exercises, and to give too little attention to the deportment of the children and to correct posture at all lessons. We here emphasize further the remarks made in our last report regarding the advantages of "refresher camps," and we are in entire sympathy with the holding—under medical supervision—of corrective classes for children physically below normal standard.

*Singing.*—In reporting on the work of his classes in singing Mr. Parker says, *inter alia*, "That the work done in past years has borne much fruit cannot, I think, be denied in the face of the remarkable performance given in the Town Hall last winter by a choir of some seven hundred children. I had not heard a similar choir since the opening of the hall some ten years ago, and the improvement shown in the recent performance was in all points—but especially in the most important of all, viz., quality of tone—simply amazing. Those patriotic concerts last July must, I think, have amply demonstrated to all who were present what an important and uplifting element in the education of the children our school music might be, and already to some extent has been, made. They also showed that we have in our schools a considerable number of teachers who are doing excellent work in this direction."

*District High Schools.*—[See E.-6, Report on Secondary Education.]

*Training of Teachers.*—The summer school for uncertificated teachers was held at the Normal School during the month of February under the charge of Mr. F. J. Morgan, M.Sc., Science Lecturer at the Training College. Twenty-one teachers attended—six from Wellington, nine from Grey, and six from Nelson. The Principal of the Training College in reporting on their work states, "The teachers were regular in their attendance, and showed much interest in all departments of their work."

A school of instruction in agriculture, under the charge of Mr. Cumming, Senior Agricultural Instructor, assisted by Mr. Stevenson and Miss Lazarus, was held at Masterton for the fortnight beginning 6th September. Mr. Howe and Mr. Grant also gave instruction in woodwork applicable to agriculture. Forty-six teachers—the majority of whom were from small country schools—attended, and all displayed great interest in the work. We hope the Board will continue such schools as these, for they afford the only opportunity some of the country teachers have of receiving instruction in the practical work of their profession.

The Director of Education, Wellington.

T. R. FLEMING,  
F. H. BAKEWELL, } Inspectors.  
F. G. A. STUCKEY, }

## HAWKE'S BAY.

SIR,—

Napier, 29th February, 1916.

I have the honour to report on the general condition of the schools in Hawke's Bay Education District during the year 1915.

*Number of Schools and Enrolment.*—Our list includes 148 public schools, two of which were not open in December, and twenty-one private schools, including convents. The increase in public schools is five. The enrolment has increased from 12,510 to 12,782. The comparatively small gain (272) is below what the experience of previous years had rendered probable. Sixty-two schools show growth and sixty declined. The Hastings group gained 118, Gisborne seventy-seven, Napier thirty-seven, Woodville twenty-six, Wairoa seven. The Dannevirke group lost twenty-three. The last two years have added 345 pupils to the Hastings group. Increase of the business area in Gisborne throws the main pressure on suburban schools.

*Environment.*—In various centres Committees, parents, and teachers, notwithstanding claims originating in the war, have united and at considerable expense both of money and personal effort have succeeded in effecting extensive improvements in the surroundings of the schools.