

Viewed as a whole, progress toward placing the teaching of domestic subjects on a thoroughly sound basis has for some years past been steadily maintained, until it can now be safely affirmed that the teaching is becoming broad, interesting, informative, and educative, and with an assured supply of teachers well trained in both the theory and practice of cookery and allied subjects it may be expected that these important matters pertaining to the home which make for social and national efficiency will receive even fuller attention and recognition.

There is, however, one matter connected with the instruction in some centres which appears to call for serious consideration. The average lessons in cookery throughout the Dominion are of two hours' duration, and it is considered that too much time is devoted to note-taking. If the notes represented the children's impression of the lessons given and were stated in their own language no exception could be taken to them; but where these notes are recipes and methods copied from the blackboard with the addition of a few more or less related facts on hygiene or housecraft, it would appear to be a waste of time that could be devoted to instruction in essentials. To obviate this educational waste the general adoption of a small cookery-book, containing recipes of dishes that may be included in a two-years course in elementary cookery, with brief notes on methods of preparation and cooking, is recommended. Two excellent little books are available, both of them prepared by teachers of ability and wide experience as instructors, and in the districts where they are used valuable time is saved, and, speaking generally, put to more useful purposes.

In a number of districts instruction in laundry-work and dressmaking is associated with that in cookery, and although the first-named subject is limited and does not readily lend itself to variety and change, the lessons are made interesting by the inclusion therein of instruction in elementary underlying principles. For the most part these classes serve a useful purpose in that the lessons contain practical hints on methods that are of immediate use in the home; and, further, they afford a valuable training in deftness and neatness, and contribute to the cultivation of habits of cleanliness and attention to personal appearance.

The instruction in dressmaking is on thoroughly sound lines, and the average work in the majority of classes appears to prove that simple, well-fitting, and well-made undergarments, blouses, and skirts can be prepared by girls in Standards V and VI without reference to any mechanical devices for pattern-draughting other than a rule and straight-edge. Encouragement is given to the application of suitable simple decorative designs in needlework to many of the garments made.

The number of recognized classes in elementary physical measurements remains practically stationary. This is to be regretted, as the subject affords an opportunity of introducing pupils in the upper standards to some of the simpler fundamental facts of science and to scientific method generally.

Probably one of the most encouraging features of the instruction in manual training is to be found in the very earnest and enthusiastic manner in which elementary agriculture is generally treated. In quite a number of districts the indirect effects of the instruction are to be found in the large number of children who have become interested in gardening, and as a result have taken over the care and almost the entire cultivation of the home gardens, and in the improvements that have been effected in the school-grounds. Some of them have been made beautiful with flowers and grass plots, and many so much improved as to make them unrecognizable as school-grounds, and if these were the only results of the expenditure on elementary agriculture the money would not have been ill-spent. The direct results are not as tangible, but it is considered that the experimental plots, and the series of related experiments carried out in the gardens and in the class-rooms, familiarizes the children with scientific methods, and while the amount of scientific knowledge of agriculture gained may be limited, the interest created in matters pertaining to the soil, seeds, methods of propagation, plant-foods, and crops must eventually have a beneficial effect on one of the most important of our primary industries.

Speaking generally the pupils' records of experimental work are fairly well kept, but there is a tendency in the direction of making the notebooks a record of the teachers' work rather than a record of the pupils' work. The dictated note has its value, and tends to uniformity in many directions, but it is considered that the notebook containing the record of what the child did and saw during the experiment, and any conclusions based thereon expressed, however briefly, in the child's own words has a far higher educational value to the child than the notebook full of information supplied by the teacher.

The Director of Education, Wellington.

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## NO. 2. EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF EDUCATION BOARDS, DIRECTORS AND SUPERVISORS OF MANUAL INSTRUCTION, ETC.

[For Reports on Rural Courses in District High Schools see E.—6. Report on Secondary Education.]

### AUCKLAND.

#### EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF SUPERVISOR OF MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

At the end of 1915 there were manual-training schools at Ponsonby, Newmarket, Newton, Otahuhu, Pukekohe, Hamilton, Cambridge, Te Aroha, Waihi, Thames, Helensville, Te Kopuru, Dargaville, and Whangarei. The three city manual-training schools provide insufficient accommodation for