

*Woodwork and Cookery.*—About 40 per cent. of the schools in the district received instruction in these subjects, the number of schools in attendance at each centre being as follows: Invercargill No. 1, 8; Invercargill No. 2, 25; Gore, 24; Riverton, 14. In addition to these, two classes from the High School attended the Gore centre for both cookery and woodwork, and in the case of Invercargill main centre a class of girls and two classes of boys from the Technical High School also received instruction. In connection with the latter school, owing to the increase in the number of classes from primary schools it was found impossible to set apart one whole day as in the past for secondary-school classes, and it is evident that it is but a matter of time before the services of the instructors will have to be devoted entirely to primary-school work.

In the case of the town schools the interest taken in their work by quite a number of boys was evidenced by their eagerness to be allowed to work during other than school hours. In addition to the ordinary class-work it should be mentioned that a considerable amount of work of a patriotic nature was also undertaken by the primary-school boys, who were responsible for the making of 2,800 tent-runners for the Defence Department and sixty Red Cross packing-boxes for the local branch of the society.

Towards the close of the year an exhibition of the work done in both the cookery and the woodwork classes was held in conjunction with the Technical College display, and created considerable interest, the woodwork display being specially meritorious. Particular interest was taken also in the work of the ex-pupil of the Summer Institute for the Deaf and Dumb. As in the previous year, the parents of children in attendance at these classes from the town schools were afforded an opportunity of seeing these classes at work, and those who availed themselves of the invitation assuredly went away with a better understanding of the value of the instruction imparted.

*Elementary Agriculture.*—The enthusiasm of the agricultural instructor and of the teachers is reflected in the evident interest taken by the children in their garden-work and in the intelligent answers given by them under examination. A comprehensive scheme of indoor experimental work, based on the subject of soils, was drawn up, the experiments being interesting and well within the understanding of the children concerned, in addition to being of highly educational value in the hands of the intelligent teacher. In regard to the outdoor practical work a series of experiments in the growing of potatoes was carried out. The scheme provided for the planting of scabbed potatoes treated with formalin, and for comparisons to be made in the results obtained from cut *versus* whole potatoes and sprouted *versus* unsprouted. In addition each school was provided with three kinds of field-turnip seed and a variety of vegetable and flower seeds. A supply of lime and manure was also sent out. In this way efforts were made to impart a knowledge of correct garden procedure, to provide material for nature-study, and by beautifying the school-grounds to cultivate the aesthetic taste. On the visits of the instructor to the various schools opportunity was taken to give instruction in regard to the noxious weeds of the district and their eradication. The life-histories of various insects, both beneficial and destructive, were also fully dealt with, as well as the best means of destroying or controlling such as are pests.

In a number of schools excellent work was done in the garden, and results were obtained that were a credit alike to the teacher and the children; but there are still cases to be found where the somewhat untidy and neglected state of the plot shows only too plainly that the teacher has not grasped the value of this subject of instruction in stimulating the mental activity and intellectual growth of a child. Where an intelligent scheme of co-ordination is practised the teaching of such subjects as composition, arithmetic, drawing, mensuration, &c., is materially assisted.

The Board was much indebted to the local manure-merchants for generously providing all the manures required for the garden plots, the total value of the donations amounting to £10 13s. 6d. For the improvement of their gardens eight schools during the year forwarded applications for subsidy on voluntary contributions to the amount of £27 2s. 11d. in cash and £10 2s. in material.

*Advanced Needlework.*—The number of schools receiving instruction in this subject during the year was forty-one, an increase of fifteen over the corresponding figures for the previous year. Recognizing the latent possibilities of these classes in the way of assisting to relieve distress amongst those in the Home lands who were suffering as a result of the ravages of war, the Board provided material for these classes for the making of children's garments, and the girls entered most enthusiastically into the work. Altogether over three thousand garments were made and sent Home for distribution. The work sent in from all the schools was highly creditable alike to the teachers and the girls concerned, and a special word of commendation is due to them for their zeal in what was evidently a labour of love.

As regards the other manual subjects, there is little that requires special reference. The number of schools where instruction was given in physical measurements was exactly the same as last year. In classes for swimming and life-saving there was an increase of five, making a total of eight schools receiving instruction. I can but repeat what was stated in my last report that surely it should be possible to have a larger number of schools where competent instructors could be found willing to devote the necessary time to the teaching of a subject that should be made compulsory in all schools where reasonable facilities exist. The fact that the capitation earned, less a small percentage for administration expenses, is paid to the instructor is evidently not a sufficient inducement.

---