of the home, and, generally speaking, a thoroughly sound course of practical instruction in the principal domestic arts is provided—limited it may be, but nevertheless of the highest utility to the future home-makers and home-keepers. In some districts qualified instructors in domestic science are available, and the science subjects of the course can therefore be made to have direct reference to home problems. In others such instructors are not yet available. Sound practical instruction is provided, the girls and boys working side by side in the laboratory, taking their part in the experiments in chemistry, physics, agriculture, &c., the girls in not a few instances surpassing the boys in manipulative skill and in the intellectual grip of fundamental science problems, sharing, too, in the outdoor work by attending to the cultivation and growth of flowers and fruit, without any apparent deterioration of true feminine qualities.

At most of the schools a more or less complete course in elementary building-construction and farm carpentry is provided; at others the tendency of the exercises in woodwork is in the direction of making lads generally handy about the farm buildings. Constructional work is not neglected, and examples of well-designed and well-built sheds, &c., constructed by lads taking the rural course are not uncommon. In one district a course in metal-work is also provided, with comparatively good results. The direct value to the pupils of the training appears to be in the direction of giving them an insight into scientific method, which should be available for immediate use on a farm, of making them self-reliant and resourceful, to the extent that if there were some necessary small repairs to be made to a machine or about the house or farm buildings, they could do what was necessary themselves without waiting for the blacksmith or for the carpenter. They would not have to depend on the vendors of artificial manures for guidance as to the kind of plant-food a crop required, their manurial experiments in the school-garden probably providing the necessary information, and the special instruction given in the physiology and treatment of farm animals might be the means of saving stock when the services of a veterinary surgeon were not available. Further examples of direct value could be given, but sufficient has been said to show that the course is not altogether devoid of direct value. The course has *some* relationship to the life and work of the farm.

Little need be said of the indirect value, important as it may be, as the rural course affords as many and as good opportunities for culture as any other secondary course; and though examination results are probably of little value in forming the true estimate, it may be remarked that 352 pupils from district high schools were candidates for elementary agriculture and 180 for dairy science at the Public Service Entrance, Senior National Scholarship, and Intermediate Examinations in 1916; of these, 75 per cent. passed in agriculture and 78 per cent. in dairy science.

It is impossible at present to obtain full and accurate data on the employment lads take up on leaving the district high school, but there is evidence that a fair percentage follow rural pursuits, and in many instances have proved that the instruction received had a direct and helpful relation to their life work, while many have drifted not from choice, but because their parents wished it, into "black-coat" occupations.

The supply of instructors for the special subjects of the rural course is an outstanding unsolved educational problem. The visiting expert teachers, excellent as they are, often work in an unsympathetic atmosphere, or their work is not followed up as it should be; the ideal conditions will be reached only when the teachers in charge of the secondary departments of the district high schools are qualified by aptitude, training, and mental equipment to give the instruction, or, failing that, to supplement and carry on the work of the visiting expert. It may be expected that the recently established system of agricultural bursaries will prove a source of supply from which the teachers with the right mental attitude toward the special work of the rural secondary school may be drawn; given these, the success of the rural course, both in the training it supplies in subjects that are immediately related to worthy human interests and in others directly related to the problems and work of the farm, does not appear impossible of achievement.

E. C. Isaac,
Inspector of Manual Instruction.

The Director of Education, Wellington.

AUCKLAND.

Report of the Senior Inspector of Schools.

The following are the names of the district high schools in operation at the close of 1916, with the enrolment in the secondary departments: Aratapu, 38; Cambridge, 14; Coromandel, 20; Normal, 17; Paeroa, 27; Pukekohe, 33; Rotorua, 16; Tauranga, 34; Te Kuiti, 24; Waihi, 60: total enrolment, 283. There is a decrease of one in the number of district high schools, it being found necessary to close the Te Aroha District High School owing to diminished attendance, and there is an increase of twelve in the total enrolment.

I may say at the outset that I am not altogether satisfied with the appearance made in these departments, in that their possibilities do not seem to be sufficiently developed either in range or extent. A pupil in a Seventh Class has reached an age when the duties and responsibilities of life are assuming definite shape, when he begins to realize the necessity for careful and perhaps prolonged preparation for the work awaiting him, and hence the need for taking advantage of the opportunities within his reach. Moreover, the days of compulsory attendance have come to an end, and, as a rule, his presence in school is a direct result of his willingness to attend. Under the circumstances one would think that with suitable guidance and direction the pupil's desire to take advantage of facilities offered would render the matter of giving successful instruction