

MANUAL INSTRUCTION.

(Tables G1-G3.)

Under the provisions of the Education Amendment Act, 1920, amendments were made in the regulations for manual and technical instruction providing for the classification of teachers of manual-training classes, defining their salaries, and making such salaries payable by the Department. The regulations relating to capitation payments for elementary handwork and subjects of manual training were also modified. A flat capitation rate based on the total roll-number in an education district was prescribed for instruction in elementary handwork for 1920 ; it is intended in future, however, that the Department will provide the material required for this work, and no payments to Boards will then be necessary. For classes in manual training taken by the special instructors referred to, capitation payments will be made merely to cover the cost of material and incidental expenses.

Elementary handwork in such subjects as modelling, paper and cardboard work, and brushwork is taught by the ordinary staff in practically every school of any size in the Dominion. The subject, which has an established place in the syllabus, is expected to be used as a means of expressing ideas and of training in clear thinking and accurate working, and also to be closely correlated with other subjects of the curriculum illustrating the abstract facts learned under the different branches of the syllabus.

In 1,600 out of a total of 2,400 schools instruction was also given in some further branch of manual training. The boys of S5 and S6 (also S4 in small schools) in 536 schools received instruction from special teachers in woodwork or ironwork, there now being 114 specially equipped centres for this purpose. The girls of similar standards from 540 schools, who numbered 12,160 in 1920, also received instruction from special instructors in domestic subjects, including a comprehensive course in cookery and domestic hygiene. This instruction is also given at suitably equipped centres which correspond in number to the woodwork and ironwork centres. Subjects relating to agriculture or dairy-work were taught in 1,450 schools—sixty-six more than in the previous year. These subjects are generally taught by the regular staff under the supervision of itinerant instructors specially qualified in the work. Different branches of elementary science were taught in 131 schools (eleven more than in 1919) and swimming and life-saving at 122 schools, all of the classes mentioned being recognized under the regulations for manual instruction for special capitation payments.

Science subjects bearing on rural pursuits are taught in the secondary departments of many district high schools, 1,680 pupils taking a rural course including such subjects in 1920. The special work is carried out for the most part by itinerant instructors. The special capitation payment previously made on account of pupils taking a rural course will be discontinued under the new arrangements for the payment of instructors. Some of the district high schools where the rural course was most successfully followed have recently been converted into technical high schools.

The following table gives some particulars of the cost to Education Boards of certain branches of manual instruction :—

Subjects.	Number of Schools.	Payments.		
		Salaries of Instructors.	Working-expenses.	Totals.
Woodwork and ironwork	536	£ 13,132	£ 2,963	£ 16,095
Domestic subjects	540	10,676	4,950	15,626
Agriculture and dairy science ..	1,450	8,125	5,307	13,432
Elementary science	131	1,346	207	1,553
Swimming and life-saving	122	455	473	928
Elementary handwork and needlework	2,232	1,690	10,968	12,658
Totals	35,424	24,868	60,292

The Department's total payments to Education Boards for the year 1920-21 on account of manual instruction amounted to £53,286.