

realizing that there must be an added emphasis on the beautiful and the orderly in the child's surroundings and in the work of his own hands if he is to fit into a civilization whose increasing mastery of the material leaves an ever-increasing leisure for the cultivation of the beautiful. The external environment, too, of the school is improving; the raising of funds for this purpose by Committees proceeds apace. Many of the country schools and a few in the city are making good use of their natural advantages, and their grounds are becoming gardens of delight. A number of the older city schools have practically no natural advantages whatever, some of the newer ones are sadly neglecting their opportunities, and—it can no longer be denied—their responsibilities. Between these extremes lies a fairly large number of schools that make but spasmodic efforts towards ground-improvements.

*Canterbury.*—The practice of decorating the walls with pictures is growing rapidly, and is having a marked effect in rendering the classrooms more attractive. The pictures are usually chosen for their direct educative value in connection with lessons in literature, history, geography, and nature-study; but, as a rule, their æsthetic value is not lost sight of. There are cases, however, where illustrations have been crowded so thickly that the effect is anything but artistic. Though we have still a long way to go before the majority of our schools can boast of beautiful surroundings, we are pleased to note a general improvement. It is in schools where the teacher is most enthusiastic that the greatest advance has been made, but much is due to the inspiration of the agricultural instructors. School Committees and children are also entitled to their share of the praise.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM W. BIRD,

Chief Inspector of Primary Schools.

The Director of Education, Wellington.

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