

Where circumstances make the instruction convenient, the care of fruit-trees and their methods of propagation may also be included.

Lessons in the first principles of agriculture must be given during the year. In all cases experiments and observation should precede the explanation, so that the pupils may have the opportunity of drawing their own conclusions.

Drawing will be found useful in all stages of the work; systematic exercises under this heading are accordingly recommended in connection with the instruction in practical agriculture, and will be accepted as part of the usual requirements in drawing.

Teachers will find a number of experiments suggested in the Appendix ("Elementary Science in Country Schools") and in the Department's Special Report on Educational Subjects, No. 6, "Rural Science and Nature-study," a copy of which has been supplied to all Native schools.

The following are the tools which are usually required for the pupils in charge of a plot: One Dutch hoe, one draw hoe, one fork, one spade, one rake.

In view of the desirability of minimizing expense as far as possible, teachers are requested to apply only for such tools as they find to be absolutely necessary. Other necessities such as lines, kits for carrying away weeds, &c., will most likely be procurable without difficulty, while for watering and other purposes kerosene-tins will no doubt be available.

(c.) *Domestic Duties.*

Wherever it may appear to the Department expedient, arrangements will be made for the instruction of the elder girls in domestic duties—viz., plain cookery, laundry-work. Teachers who may be prepared to give instruction in these subjects will be allowed full liberty, subject only to the approval of the Inspector as to the course. Teachers must, however, bear in mind that the object in view is the practical instruction of Maori girls, and the dishes taught are to be suited to the wants of the Maori people in the neighbourhood. Hence it is desirable that practice in cooking by means of the camp oven should be given occasionally. It is important that thorough instruction be given in cleanliness, order, and economy. The Department will be prepared to assist in the direction of supplying material and utensils. A list of the dishes prepared in class must be submitted to the Inspector at his visit, and instruction must be given in the first principles of the subject.

Subject to the approval of the Department, instruction may also be given in washing, starching, and ironing; and in this case also the Department will assist in supplying materials. Teachers must bring before the Inspector proposals for the establishment of classes in these subjects, and each case will be considered individually.

Suggestions for a course of instruction will be found in the Appendix.

NATURE-STUDY.

The purpose of nature-study is to train children in the careful observation of surrounding objects and common phenomena, and to set them to ask themselves questions such as "What does this mean, and how does it act, and why?" Even should it not be possible, as in small schools under the charge of one teacher, to assign to nature-study a separate place on the time-table, and by means of lessons on objects, on natural history, and in elementary science to give a definite course of instruction of this kind, yet the idea and spirit of it may be carried out in other ways. The most important parts of the lessons on geography may be thus described; some of the best subjects for exercises in oral or written composition may be led up to by questions based on the children's own observation in their ordinary life, or in their rambles about the district; the information given in many of the reading-lessons may be tested, confirmed, supplemented, and reinforced by nature-study; drawing and modelling may serve as vehicles for nature-study and thereby gain an added interest. In short, there is hardly any subject in the school course into the teaching of which the ideas that underlie nature-study may not enter.

In schools of Grade 4 and higher grades, where it is expected that provision shall be made for a definite course of nature-study or elementary science, the remarks just made apply with equal force; even the handwork, which may seem at first to compete with it for a place on the time-table, will be found to give material aid to nature-study. This will be most clearly seen in those branches of handwork which are of the character of applied science, such as agriculture, cottage-gardening, dairy-work, for which the habits of careful observation acquired in nature-study are the only sound foundation.