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THE CORRESPONDENCE SYSTEM OF TEACHING PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN NEW ZEALAND: AN ACCOUNT OF ITS EVOLUTION AND A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE METHODS APPLIED AND OF THE STANDARDS ATTAINED.

A T H E S I S

PRESENTED BY

A L L E G R O .

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS, 1933.

LEPETIT

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I N T R O D U C T I O N.

In March, 1932, the National Expenditure Commission constituted and appointed by the Governor-General of New Zealand "to enquire and report as to the possibilities of effecting reductions in the National Expenditure" presented an interim report containing recommendations relating to economies which might be effected under the heading "Education". Clause 230 of the Report reads:-

> "We have considered the possibility of effecting economies by the closing of the smaller primary schools - that is, Grade O schools. These have an average attendance of from one to eight, and they require the services of one teacher.
> The average cost of teaching pupils in these schools is £15 per pupil as against £10:15:6 per pupil for all primary schools. Children attending these schools could, without detriment to themselves, receive instruction through the Correspondence School conducted by the Department. The average cost of teaching children in that school is approximately £6 per head, so that a saving of £9 per head would result."

Clause 231 continues:-

> "The value of the instruction provided by the Correspondence School has been amply demonstrated during the ten years in which it has been in operation, and we are convinced that the pupils would receive adequate training under this system. In Victoria the Economy Committee which recently considered educational expenditure recommended the closing of all schools with a roll of ten or less.
> Estimated saving by closing all Grade O schools, £12,600."

The "tabling" of the Report was followed by protests from many of the remote communities likely to be affected and from several associations and public bodies interested in Education.

A press report [1] of a meeting of the Wellington School Committees' and Educational Federation stated that:-

> "Strong protests against the closing of Grade O schools, involving the teaching of children by correspondence, or at larger schools, in attending which it would be necessary for children to board, were expressed. In view of the reduction of the boarding grant by the Education Department, it was often impossible for parents to have their children boarding, and correspondence was seldom satisfactory. The matter arose out of a letter from a parent in the St. Omer School district, pointing out that the correspondence course might serve the purpose for bright pupils who had passed the fourth Standard, but not for those who were in the very early stages of their education.
>
> "Mr. J.J. C--- said that many country parents either were unable, or did not have the time, to assist their children with their correspondence classes. He was a strong advocate of retaining Grade O schools."

The Timaru "Herald",[2] in the course of a report of a meeting of the local branch of the Women's Division of the Farmers' Union records that:-

> "The president referred to the question of the closing of the 'O Grade' schools. As this was purely a question affecting children in the wayback country districts, he said, it was the duty of the Women's Division to take up the matter. Having had experience with the Correspondence School, she realised the excellent work being done there. This course, however, entailed a great deal of time and work, on the part of some members of the household willing to undertake the supervision of the work sent out. In many cases it would be impossible. Very few women in the country have time to supervise the children's home lessons, let alone direct them all day. Another aspect was the discipline required to keep the children at the work. They would also lose the company of other children, and this meant so much in their lives. Personally she thought the correspondence lessons should be taken only as a last resource."

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[1] Wellington "Evening Post", 15.6.32.

[2] Timaru "Herald", 11.12.31.

The comments and opinions quoted above may be regarded as indicative of the attitude of the general public towards the Commission's decisions. There was evident, however, in the more official quarters, a forbearance from criticism of the correspondence methods due probably to uncertainty regarding the functioning of the system. That the position was one which aroused considerable public concern was evident from the fact that members of the Wellington Education Board considered it advisable to make a personal investigation of the Correspondence Schools (Primary and Secondary) . Several members expressed the opinion that the Schools were doing excellent work, and it was suggested that all members should see for themselves what was being done. "If the Correspondence Schools failed at times, it was often due to the inability of the parents to do their part. In this they could not always be blamed, seeing that in some homes they were working from daylight to dark." [1]

From the more professional standpoint it is interesting to note the suggestions submitted by the New Zealand Educational Institute relative to the Commission's recommendations as contained in the clauses 230 and 231. After traversing the financial side of the question the Executive reports in "National Education":- [2]

> "The Executive recognises that the correspondence method of education in the primary sphere is a recent development in the educational provision for the needs of back-block children, and considers that before it should be extended further the fullest investigation should be made into the system, including:-
> (1) The standards of the pupils' work in

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[1] Wellington "Evening Post", 15.9.32.

[2] Supplement to "National Education", May, 1932, (page viii).

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comparison with those in the ordinary schools.
(2) The scale of staffing and salaries paid to the teachers.
(3) The means adopted to provide for the pupils the wider social contacts and those amenities of school life which constitute an important element in the education of every child."

The policy of the Government had evidently already been formed along the lines advocated by the Commission, for in the Finance Bill (No. 4), 1931, the Minister of Education was given power to close any school if he found the children were able conveniently to attend any other school or to become enrolled as pupils of a correspondence school, and to enrol these children compulsorily in a correspondence school.

Up to this time the Correspondence School was regarded more or less as an educational experiment originally inaugurated "to provide for about twenty to forty pupils in isolated districts where the education of children of shepherds, lighthouse keepers, and a few isolated settlers remained unprovided for". It was, by the passing of the Finance Bill (No. 4), henceforth to be recognised as an integrant part of the system of compulsory education within New Zealand, and as specifically providing for the education of children in remote localities.

To the settlers in the isolated districts likely to be affected by its enforcement the Act merely meant transferring the onus of education on to the parents and penalizing the back-block children; to the profession, anxious to safeguard the interests of its individual members, it savoured of Governmental parsimony; and to the educationists, whether lay or professional the extensive operation

of the Act was considered as decidedly retrogressive chiefly in that it denied the social contact among pupils and the personal association of pupils and teachers.

The problem was one that affected a considerable and economically important section of the community, and, in view of the apprehensions aroused together with the general uncertainty as to the methods and scope of the correspondence system of education, one which should be carefully surveyed and investigated. In the following chapters the writer presents the results of such an investigation undertaken along the lines suggested in the report of the Executive Committee of the New Zealand Teachers' Institute. The enquiry has been developed along two lines:-

(a) A survey of the development and organization of the Correspondence School, of the methods adopted, and of its scope; of the attitude of teachers and pupils particularly in regard to the development of "social" interests;

(b) A comparative study of the results obtained:
(i) from attainment tests applied to pupils of the Correspondence School and to children attending Grade 0 schools;
(ii) from the Form 2 Proficiency Examination of schools of Grade 0 and Grade 1 [1], of an average city school and of the Correspondence School.

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[1] Grade 0 schools: Schools with roll number 1-8.
Grade 1 schools: Schools with roll number 9-21.

CHAPTER ONE.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CORRESPONDENCE SYSTEM OF PRIMARY INSTRUCTION IN NEW ZEALAND.

One branch of its educational activities that the Government of New Zealand has generously fostered is that pertaining to the education of children in rural districts. Various methods have been adopted within the last fifty years to raise the standard of education in the remoter localities, each method subscribing along certain lines to the general advance and to the definite raising of the level to approximate more closely the urban standard of education. The effectiveness of some of the methods has sanctioned their survival; others either have been superceded by more modern schemes or have succumbed to the "economy axe".

Direct methods adopted at different times expressly to promote such improvement include:-

(a) the opening of fully equipped schools under qualified teachers, a yearly average attendance of nine pupils being assured in each instance;

(b) the subsidizing of "Household" Schools to the extent of £15 per pupil in average attendance, the parents being required to provide board and lodging for the teachers;

(c) the appointment of itinerant teachers to visit the pupils living in homes widely scattered within a large district;

(d) the granting of conveyance allowances to pupils travelling more than three miles by public or private means to attend the nearest school;

(e) the granting of boarding allowances to assist parents in boarding their children to enable them to attend school;

(f) the appointment of organizing teachers to "assist the head or sole teachers of the schools placed under their supervision with regard to organization, schemes of work, methods of teaching, and other matters affecting the efficiency of the schools";

(g) the voluntary "adoption" by efficiently conducted city schools of small country schools, by interchange of ideas and of samples of work, helping the latter materially to attain a higher standard.

Less direct but probably much more effective methods were:-

(h) the raising substantially of the remuneration of rural teachers making positions in country schools more attractive financially than the lower grade town positions;

(i) the establishment of model country schools attached to each of the teachers' training colleges, and of supplementary model country schools in certain centres.

Introduced by successive admittedly "country-biassed" governments to enhance the standard of rural education, these methods were, in practice, successful to varying degrees in fulfilling their purposes. The least successful possibly was the method of itinerant teachers which has not been extensively used and which in recent years has lapsed into desuetude.

In 1922 still another method, unpretentious as to the extent of its application was offered, this time to the most remote of the isolated settlers, as a means of

bringing the last remaining children of the country within the direct influence of the education system.

Following on a visit paid by the Director of Education for New Zealand to some of the Australian states where Correspondence Classes had already been in operation for some years, it was decided to introduce on a much smaller scale a similar method of instruction to serve the educational needs of the very isolated families in New Zealand. A sole teacher was appointed to initiate the scheme but it is evident that, from the beginning, the Department had no reliable estimate of the subsequent growth of the institution nor of the work which it was later to accomplish. In 1923 the Chief Inspector in his annual report [1] presented to the Minister of Education stated, anent the establishment of Correspondence Classes that:-

> "It was at first thought that not more than twenty or thirty pupils would be enrolled, but at the time of writing, eighteen months after the inception of the scheme, no less than 576 pupils have been enrolled. There is evidently a good deal of moving to and fro among the back-block settlers, for the effective roll at present is 317. Even this number is surprisingly large, and indicates how great the need was for classes of the kind."

About two hundred pupils were enrolled within the first eight weeks and the staffing soon proved quite inadequate to deal with the work. The advertising of the classes in the press, by public notices displayed in country post offices and by circular to lighthouse keepers, as providing "free instruction by correspondence to children who are unable by reason of distance to attend any public, private or household school" probably assisted

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[1] Report E-2, 1923: Append. A, page iv.

in swelling the number of applications for enrolment.

A very important fact relating to the establishment of the classes was that the State Education Department inaugurated them not as a measure of economy but as an extension of its activities. It had a responsibility in the education of the remote children and was willing to undertake that responsibility apparently without any pressure of public opinion - probably in emulation of the successful Australian efforts. The anticipated additional cost to the State of the education of from twenty to thirty pupils was small and the Department while committing itself to comparatively little extra expenditure was extending a valuable service. The demand, however, was much greater than was foreseen and continued to increase as the possibilities of the scheme were realized by the parents whose location made difficult the attendance of their children at a school. Favourable reports and appreciative letters from various sources indicated general public approval of the scheme. In his Annual Report for 1922 [1] the Chairman of the Hawke's Bay Education Board stated that:-

> "The Correspondence instruction has proved a boon to many children in the back-block districts. Many applications still continue to be received as the success of the scheme becomes more known, and any prejudice against it is gradually disappearing. The Board desires to repeat its congratulations to the Department on introducing this scheme which is undoubtedly a great success."

Probably as a consequence of the fast mounting roll the organization of the classes was in a perpetual state of instability as will be gathered from an analysis of the figures relating to the staffing of the School.

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[1] Report E-2, 1923: Append. B, page vii.

TABLE A - Showing: (a) the Growth of the Roll of the Correspondence School during the Years 1922-1933; (b) the Number of Teachers on the Staff at the End of Each Successive Year; and (c) the Average Number of Pupils per Teacher for Each Year.

Year:	No. of Pupils at End of Year:	No. of Teachers:	Average No. of Pupils per Teacher:
1922	300	2 assistants.	150
1923	450	H.M.+ 2 assistants.	150
1924	504	" + 6 "	72
1925	502	" + 6 "	72
1926	505	" + 7 "	63
1927	620	" + 10 "	62
1928	720	" + 10 "	72
1929	795	" + 13 "	61.1
1930	860	" + 14 "	61.4
1931	973	" + 14 "	69.5
1932	1186	" + 21 "	56.4
1933 (as at 31.8.33)	1300	" + 21 "	61.9

Yet, although the classes were insufficiently provided for, the State Department,possibly prompted by expressions of general approval, but probably actuated largely by a desire to use what primarily was a beneficent extension of the general education system as a means of effecting economies, circularized all parents who had set up Household (Grade 0)

Schools to the effect that "the Hon. Minister of Education has for some time had under consideration a method of increasing the efficiency of Household Schools. ..... The Education Department considers it would be to your advantage to disestablish your Household or Aided School and to enrol your children in the Correspondence Classes at the end of the present year. You will, of course, understand that this is not compulsory". [1] Protests, however, were voiced against the Department's recommendation regarding the Household Schools. After commenting on the boon that the classes had proved to many of the backblock children, the Chairman of the Hawke's Bay Education Board in his 1923 report stated:-

> "The Board does not, however, agree with the Department's policy to eliminate Grade O schools and to substitute correspondence instruction. Our experience is that excellent work is done in these small schools and that wherever and whenever possible they should be continued. There is no need to point out the benefit to be derived by the children from instruction given in a school environment and under school discipline." [2]

In response to the appeal of certain Education Boards, the Minister, in December, 1923, authorised the enrolment of children of parents employing a governess as pupils of the Classes "provided that no capitation is being paid on their behalf by any Education Board".

Early in 1924 the Hon. Secretary to the Conference of Education Boards, writing to the Hon. Minister, conveyed to him the Board's approbation of his efforts "for promoting the education of children in remote districts. They consider that it would probably be worth while to send copies of the papers set by the instructors to all teachers

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[1] Circular letter from Director to interested parents - 15.8.33.

[2] Report E-2, 1923.

of aided schools who would thus have competent guidance in the work to be undertaken". [1]

During the same year a definite stand was taken by the Minister against further expansion of the activities of the Classes. In April, 1924, former decisions were revised and instructions issued to include any pupils falling into the following categories as among those eligible for enrolment:-

(a) Pupils living beyond a reasonable distance from an existing school (i.e. a distance of five miles);

(b) Pupils permanently debarred from attending school by physical weakness or by disease;

(c) Pupils from homes where a governess is employed;

Children classed in groups (d), (e) and (f) were recommended for admission by the Director of Education whose proposals were vetoed by the Minister.

(d) Children who are considered by the Senior Inspector of Schools to be too young to travel to the nearest school;

(e) Those over school age (15 years);

(f) Post primary pupils.

The necessity for a review of the organization of the classes to ensure a teaching staff sufficient to cope with the pupils enrolled became evident to the Minister. The question of staffing was a difficulty as the different teaching methods demanded a vastly different technique and opinions varied considerably regarding the number of pupils each teacher could handle effectively under the new system. In April, 1924, Mr. T.U. Wells, a prominent Auckland educationist and ex-head teacher of a large city school, was asked by the Minister of Education to report

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[1] School file - 21.3.24,

on the organization and management of the Department's Correspondence Classes. In his report Mr. Wells made the recommendation that " as it is evident that the School is filling a felt want and is doing good work, I recommend that it be made a permanent institution and be staffed on a recognised scale, so that assistance may be increased or reduced automatically with an increase or decrease in the roll number. One assistant should be able to manage the work of the Primer Division, but I consider there should be a competent teacher for every fifty or fraction of fifty pupils on the roll in the Standard classes." The outcome of the Report was that the roll was limited to a maximum of 500 pupils, only urgent applications were to be accepted, and the staff was increased to the minimum strength required on the suggested basis, i.e. one teacher for every fifty pupils in Standard classes and one fully qualified infant teacher for the Primer Department. Towards the end of 1924 the Director was instructed not to authorize the admission of any more pupils to the Correspondence School as the staff was much overburdened with work.

From various sources strong protests against the Minister's decision were received. The Auckland Education Board among others expressed great regret at the decision and recommended extending the privilege to as many children as could take advantage of it. Not until 1927, however, was the limit abolished and the benefits of the Correspondence Classes made available to children in categories other than those previously defined by the Minister. Answering an appeal made in the House of Representatives for the expenditure of more money on the Correspondence branch of the Department's activities, the Hon. Minister mentioned that the

Department was aiming at extending the system, and the expression of approval which had been voiced would strengthen his hand.

The Department again pursued an active policy in discouraging the establishment of smaller Household Schools and recommending the Boards "to consider carefully before establishing an aided school whether it would not be preferable to have the children instructed by the Department's Correspondence Classes". Support was forthcoming from many quarters where certain benefits of the system were recognised but by many people the new system was viewed with apprehension for to them the disestablishment of the "Household" and "Aided" schools meant casting the burden of educating the children on to the already heavily worked mothers. The Department recognised the difficulties of supervision, especially where there were members of the family under school age "but if it were explained in every case to the parents that the welfare of their children was concerned, the Department considers that parents would make an effort to find the requisite time". [1]

A survey of the approved applications for admission during the years 1927 and 1928 discloses that twenty-one pupils were entered on the roll of the Correspondence School because of the closing of eleven "Household" or "Aided" schools. In addition fifty pupils were entered as having previously received instruction from governesses, while from a family of four came an application for admission in lieu of an application for the establishment of an "Aided" school. The great majority of applications were from families living at distances of over five miles from estab-

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[1] Director's letter to Education Boards, 21.3.27.

lished public primary schools.

Further extension of the services offered to the pupils of the Correspondence School included the inauguration in 1926 of free dental treatment at the Department's dental clinics in the various centres. In 1928 schemes were drawn up to meet the demand for secondary education by correspondence and this department commenced at the beginning of 1929 by offering courses in English, Arithmetic, Mathematics, Agriculture, Book-keeping, Geography and History. This was a very valuable provision, for without such a course many pupils who had graduated through the Primary Division had no other practicable means for advancing their education. One-hundred-and-twenty-one pupils were entered on the roll of the Secondary Department during the first year of its functioning and of these twenty-three were continuing from the Primary Department of the Correspondence School.

A further valuable addition to the curriculum offered in the Primary course was the introduction in 1929 of a course in needlecraft under the direction of a qualified instructress. The development of this essentially practical subject within the curriculum would naturally be watched with interest.

In 1931 legislation was introduced by the Government and passed by Parliament placing admission to the School definitely on a compulsory basis. The Finance Act (No. 4) reads:-

> 37 (1) "Where pursuant to any lawful authority the Minister has established Correspondence Schools or Correspondence Classes, the Director may, by notice in writing, call upon the parent of any child exempted from attendance at school under paragraph (a) or paragraph (d) of subsection one of

Section sixty of the Principal Act [1], to have the name of the child enrolled on the register of any such school or classes for the period of the exemption, and to ensure the carrying out by the child of the requirements of the course of instruction.

(2) A parent who fails to have the name of his child enrolled as aforesaid, or who having so enrolled the name of his child allows the child to make default in carrying out the requirements of the course of instruction, shall be liable to the same penalty as in the case of failure to enrol the name of a child on a school register or as in the case of non-attendance of a child at school, as the case may be."

Prior to 1931 enrolment of children of school age was purely voluntary on the part of the parents, and a considerable number of applications for the admission of children exempt from attendance at ordinary primary schools on account of distance were refused. Applications for the admission to the Classes of healthy children living within five miles of a school had not been approved. The Act prior to 1931, however, compelled the attendance only of children living within three miles of a school. Those children who lived at distances ranging from three to five miles from the nearest school were constantly refused admission to the Correspondence School and yet were not compelled to attend the nearest established school. The Amendment to the Act extends the power of the Minister to compel such children to register with the Correspondence School should they not be attending another school.

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[1] These sections read:-

60 (1) Exemption from School attendance:

(a) That the total distance that the child would be required to walk from his place of residence to the railway or other public conveyance and from the railway or other public conveyance to the school, is more than two miles in the case of a child under ten years of age, or three miles in any other case, the distance being estimated by the nearest road.

(d) That the road by which the child has to travel to school is not sufficiently passable.

TABLE B [1] - Indicating Distances from the nearest Primary School at which Pupils of the Correspondence School reside.

Distance from School:	No. of Pupils:	Notes:
Under 1 mile.	40	All invalids.
Over 1 mile and under 2 miles.	26	All invalids.
Over 2 miles and under 3 miles.	40	19 invalids, 15 on account of dangerous roads, cliffs, etc.
Over 3 miles and under 4 miles.	70	5 invalids, 12 on account of roads, etc.
Over 4 miles and under 5 miles.	111	3 invalids.
Over 5 miles.	901	Many of these are 10, 12, 15 and 20 and up to 80 miles.
Islands and lighthouses.	27	
Total	1215	

Actually then, the position regarding remote country education, whether as an accepted general policy measure, or as a temporary expediency is that previous methods are being completely annulled or definitely discouraged and the Correspondence Classes, now officially recognised as a school, substituted therefor. The strong support given by the recommendations of the

[1] Return prepared 28.7.32. - School records.

Economy Commission has provoked numerous expressions of opinion and a feeling of uncertainty is evident among both laymen and educationists regarding the wisdom of the measures being adopted.

In the succeeding chapter the methods and scope of the Correspondence School will be studied with the object of determining to what extent it may be accepted as a substitute for the methods it has supplanted. An endeavour will also be made concurrently to estimate "the means adopted to provide for the pupils the wider social contacts and those amenities of school life which constitute an important element in the education of every child". [1]

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[1] Report by the Executive N.Z.E.I., "National Education"- page viii, May, 1932.

C H A P T E R T W O.

THE CORRESPONDENCE METHOD IN RELATION TO:

A. the Child,

B. the Curriculum,

C. the Teacher.

"The Executive would like to be assured that the conditions of the organization of the Correspondence School are fully satisfactory before recommending an extension of the system ....." [1]

In the course of the development of the Correspondence School, difficulties have had to be overcome, problems solved, innovations admitted and compromises accepted which, in the normal functioning of ordinary primary schools would seldom, if ever, be called into consideration. Unusual methods and procedures peculiar to the needs of the school organization in general, and recognising the special interests of the individual pupils in particular, have had to be adopted. Flexibility of organization must be one of the indispensable features of an institution, the reason for the very existence of which lies in the wide diversity of circumstance and environment existing among its constituent members. However highly and efficiently developed the organization becomes, the individual units, whether they be from shepherd's cottage, lighthouse, bushman's whare, or sickbed, to make only a short selection, demand from the school, and present to it, entirely different attitudes and relationships. The

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[1] Supplement to "National Education", May, 1932, (page).

isolation of the pupils in surroundings so free from society's equalizing influences must give to each child, from the viewpoint of the school organization, an individuality, of whatever kind it may be, quite distinctive from that of other pupils.

But whatever variations there may be in the methods and the organization of the system, the educator is still confronted with the three indispensable factors in the process - the child, the curriculum, and the teacher; and the problem of the Correspondence School remains identical with that of all other schools: to incorporate the content of the accepted curriculum, through the agency of the teacher, as an essential part of the experience of the child. For our purposes no qualitative estimate of the content of that curriculum nor of its value as essential experience need be undertaken. We proceed to the separate study and analysis of the functioning of each of these factors within the educational system of the Correspondence School.

(A) THE CHILD:

(1) The Social Factor: The greatest of all the disadvantages which the pupil of the Correspondence School suffers, and greatest because of its bearing so many attendant disabilities, is his social isolation. The separation from other children excludes many social influences the study of which is extra even though relevant to the scope of this essay; but two relationships affecting the pupil and of great importance to the survey are:-

(a) association with other pupils;

(b) contact with his teacher.

(a) Association with other Pupils:

The great majority of the pupils of the Correspondence School have relatively few opportunities for social intercourse with other children of similar age outside their own family circles. It is the purpose of this study not to dwell on the detrimental effects which must follow such denial of participation in valuable social relationships but to indicate to what greater or lesser extent the Correspondence School pupil is affected more than is his friend in the small country school.

In many schools of Grade O the pupils represent very few families, possibly not more than two or three, sometimes merely one family. [1] In such remote localities it is probable that all the families are engaged in similar pursuits, a condition that limits appreciably the value of social intercourse among them. The range of ages of such a small number of pupils would still further reduce the number in each school who would have common interests and who would benefit from one another's company. Attendance at such remote schools often makes it necessary for the pupils to travel considerable distances and this further limits social intercourse among the pupils outside the actual school hours when lessons demand their attention. However, even the limited amount and the restricted quality of the social relationship which the country school pupil enjoys during his school hours is of great value; it increases his knowledge of human nature, enables him better to adapt himself within wider social groups, facilitates oral expression, and gives him the joys of a more varied companionship.

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[1] See Appendix B-(1).- page x.

Many Correspondence School pupils are denied participation in these social benefits and to compensate partly for the lack of opportunities afforded them to meet personally with fellow pupils, the school has instituted among its pupils certain associations which enable them to come into contact with others of their own age or pursuing similar interests.

(i) Companies of "Lone Guides" and "Lone Scouts" have been organized under the disciplinary authority of the Scout and Guide Movements;

(ii) a Stamp Club attracts increasing numbers of keen members who periodically pool and share their surplus resources;

(iii) prospective engineers vie with one another in the construction of intricate Meccano models;

(iv) interest in photography is encouraged and members of the Camera Club have produced some excellent studies;

(v) Pen-friendship circles are the means of establishing friendly contact between pupils residing in widely separated districts, and to a lesser extent with children of other schools and even of other lands;

(vi) the "Postman", an annual magazine compiled almost entirely from the school work and contributions of the pupils and copiously illustrated by photographs of the pupils, their pets, their homes, and their interests, already ranks as one of the finest school productions in the country;

(vii) a "Monthly Circular" distributed to every family represented on the roll, contains the news of the school, reports of the activities of the different Clubs,

and information regarding the ways by which pupils might further indulge in their particular interests;

and (viii) not least in importance is the issue of a school badge of appropriate design and aptly inscribed.

By such methods the school seeks to foster the social mindedness of its pupils, to broaden their interests, and to strengthen their individuality.

The comparison, thus far, has enabled us to recognise a distinction between the types of contact made: on the one hand the limited, local and personal relationship; on the other the broader, invisible and indirect associations of a much vaster organization.

(b) Contact with the Teacher:

Individual methods of instruction are probably, in view of the limited number of pupils, in general use throughout the low grade country schools. The problem then, from the standpoint of the pupil's interest, is whether instruction is preferable by means of postal methods or by personal contact with the teacher.

It is improbable that the child of average ability is able to concentrate on his lessons for periods of any length without some vital stimulus to his interest; nor is he able to elucidate difficult problems or follow the themes of certain lessons without clear explanations other than those given in the text books. In the country school such explanations may be given immediately the difficulties arise but the Correspondence pupil is dependent either on the older members of the household or on a teacher far removed. Perhaps the postal teacher has foreseen certain

difficulties and has provided extra explanatory tuition to supplement the particular lessons, but no teacher could ever foresee all the possible pitfalls for the numerous children under his instruction. Frequently, as will be elaborated when the Curriculum is being discussed, long periods of time elapse before certain erroneous conceptions assimilated by the child are eradicated, and correct associations substituted.

The teacher,present, is able to extend encouragement and guidance at the most suitable time, he can administer reproof and insist on a disciplined attitude; the teacher by post, by his own particular methods has proved that he can accomplish much by encouragement, stimulation, guidance, and discipline, but the results, other factors being equal, should be vastly in favour of the personal contact.

Often it has been observed that an active teacher in charge of small numbers of pupils might so precipitate his own personality into his work that the pupils suffer from excessive teaching, lose initiative and fail to develop their own individualities . The attitude of the Correspondence pupils as indicated in their work and in letters to their teachers impresses one as being particularly individual, natural, and eager, the teacher's ability and sincerity being accepted implicitly.

(2) ENVIRONMENT:

It is difficult to dogmatize concerning the suitability or otherwise of the Correspondence pupil's home as an educational environment. The homes vary considerably whether the viewpoint be: (a)accommodation and equipment available, or (b) the discipline and supervision provided.

(a) In the planning and construction of the school building and furniture, the physical well-being of the pupils is the main consideration, hygienic principles and devices being introduced which go far to minimize the detrimental effects on the pupils of prolonged indoor occupation. Seldom does the home make such important provision; the pupil is expected to make-shift with what accommodation and furniture is already available for domestic purposes. The typical country school should be much more suitable than are many of the homes for the purpose of educational activity. In many homes the pupil's schoolwork is done in the farmhouse kitchen amid the bustle of domestic activities and under the supervision of a busy parent; possibly the use of the livingroom or of a bedroom is permitted; perhaps a specially equipped schoolroom is provided. In very few instances would the milieu be considered as entirely suitable for educational purposes.

(b) The country housewife is universally granted to be the busiest woman in the land, and the extra duties imposed on her in the instruction of her own children, or even in merely supervising their lessons, must be a very onerous addition to her responsibilities. In the interests of the children's education which would otherwise be seriously affected, the mother undertakes the work generally willingly and gratefully and the splendid progress made by many of the children of such mothers is accepted as sufficient recompense. There are cases in plenty, however, where the mothers of large families of young children,[1] mothers with insufficient education [2] or of low mentality , housewives harassed by the economic necessity of assisting also with the

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[1] See Appendix B (ii). - page x.

[2] See Appendix B (iii).- page x.

arduous work of the farm,[1] are practically unable to devote to the task the time and the energy which are essential. Once having gained a reasonable facility in reading and writing, the child is able possibly to carry on unassisted by the parent for it is the teacher's aim to wean the child from dependence on the mother's tutorage at as early a stage as is possible. But relief from the actual work of instruction does not release the mother entirely as the difficulty of supervision remains a problem. For many children the assignments of work are found sufficiently interesting to obviate the necessity for parental help or supervision, but very few teachers would be capable of preparing assignments in each of the subjects which would keep all their pupils engrossed for the whole of their school time. The distractions of a busy household and the allurement of outside activities are likely often to prove of greater interest to the average boy or girl, and the opportunities for indulging that interest would increase with the inability of the parents to control their own children. [2]

In the classroom the instruction, the supervision and control of the pupils are the main functions of the teacher whose training has acquainted him with desirable and effective methods for their attainment. The tendency of the classroom, however, is to divorce the pupil from the practicalities of life, and even if by the Correspondence method less effective supervision and instruction have resulted possibly in a lower standard of scholastic attainment, yet, on the other hand, the pupil benefits by working amid the practical interests and activities of the home and by having his lessons extensively

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[1] See Appendix B (iv).- page xi.

[2] See Appendix B (vi).- page xi.

correlated with those interests by discerning teachers.

(3) CONVENIENCE:

The necessity for many children having to travel long distances to attend school has already been commented on in its bearing on the social factor. The daily travelling over long distances before and after school work has other, and probably more serious disadvantages:

(a) loss of considerable periods of time which might more profitably be employed in light household and farm duties or in recreation; [1]

(b) the fatigue caused by long walks, or even by long rides on horseback, followed immediately by intense mental concentration must be a severe drain on the resources of the child. Another long journey after some hours of fairly exacting mental exertion would leave the child unduly exhausted at the end of the day;

(c) weather conditions frequently prevent regular attendance at school [2] or at times make conditions under which the pupil remains at school uncomfortable or even inimical to his health;

(d) the adjustment of the child's timetable to fit in with domestic routine allows for the easier management of the household;

(e) the child is enabled to benefit by being allowed to accompany his parents on visits to town, to sales, and to other community gatherings which attendance at school would often prevent.

It is maintained therefore, that by correspondence tuition the pupils suffer certain general dis-

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[1] See Appendix B (vii).- page xii.

[2] See Appendix B (viii). - page xii.

advantages:

(a) Fewer opportunities are given them for adapting themselves personally to wider social groups appropriate to their age;

(b) Some of the pleasures and benefits of suitable companionship are denied to them;

(c) They are restricted in the practice of oral expression;

(d) Often they are obliged to work under unsuitable conditions both physically and mentally;

(e) Particularly during the earlier school years they are dependent on the tuition and supervision of a busy mother;

(f) Disciplinary and instructional benefits are reduced by the impersonal nature of the teacher-pupil relationship;

(g) The omission from the curriculum of some of the cultural and manual subjects is a serious loss from the standpoint of the pupil's development.

The pupils, however, derive compensating benefits from the postal method of schooling:

(a) They are introduced, though indirectly, into wider and more varied social groups;

(b) The conditions of attendance at their lessons are less arduous physically;

(c) Greater freedom is allowed them to indulge their own particular interests;

(d) They are subjected to less mental domination by the teacher;

(e) In thought and action greater independence is able to be maintained and the pupils' powers of

concentration and initiative are practised more intensively;

(f) They are enabled to participate more fully in the practicalities of life.

(B) THE COURSE OF INSTRUCTION:

The Curriculum and the Syllabus of Instruction: The range of the curriculum of the Correspondence Classes on their inauguration, as far as can be ascertained, was left undefined. The Government's Education Department offered, as noted above (see page 9) "free instruction by correspondence", and it was left to be assumed probably that the "free instruction" consisted of the subjects in which pupils would eventually be examined for their Proficiency Certificates. This actually was the course offered and included the subjects of English (Grammar, Composition, Reading, Writing and Spelling), History, Geography, Arithmetic and Drawing. The acknowledged success that attended the classes in the initial stages is a tribute to the ability of the first teacher who, practically without preparation, had to cope unassisted with work even to the extent of writing all instructions by hand. When it is remembered that over two-hundred children were enrolled within the first eight weeks one is able to realise the difficulty of the undertaking.

With the subsequent improvements in the staffing and the development of an organized and well-

equipped clerical department co-operating with the teaching staff, it was possible to extend the syllabus and arrange the lessons in a manner more suitable to the special conditions under which instruction was being given. Needlework was added to the curriculum while nature-study and speech-training have since been introduced though incidentally and correlatively rather than as individual subjects.

The programme of work then at present approximates very closely to that of the ordinary state schools, the chief omissions being music, physical training, and the manual and technical subjects such as woodwork and domestic science; but possible further development of the school might provide for the inclusion of even these subjects within the curriculum.

Text-books: The books used as texts are the same as are in general use in the primary schools throughout the country, the assignments of work being based on or referring to the lessons therein. It is interesting to note that the series of texts in English recommended by the Education Department for use in all primary schools was compiled by that same teacher who had had the responsibility of organizing and managing the Correspondence Classes during the first difficult year of their existence and were largely the outcome of the experience gained in that particular work. The text books other than those for English are not rigidly adhered to in the development of the different subjects of the curriculum for they are sometimes unable to be adapted suitably to the assignment method and, as is experienced in classroom teaching, do not always suit the plans of the teachers when dealing with the particular

subjects. The assignments of work prepared by the teachers not only indicate the lessons to be done by the pupils but are used for purposes of giving further enlightenment where this is considered necessary and for supplementing the work dealt with in the books.

Time-Table: No fixed time-table is provided for the pupils for, as the mother is expected to supervise the work of the children in the lower classes, it is considered that any attempt at regularizing the lessons along schoolroom lines might encroach unnecessarily on the routine of the home and so provoke irritation. As much as possible the parents are left to make whatever arrangements they consider most convenient or most desirable. In many of the homes a routine closely resembling that of the traditional schoolroom is observed. For the guidance of parents a statement has been prepared showing the amount of time that the pupils of each class should devote to the different subjects.

TABLE C - Showing Time per Week recommended for each Subject in each Class.

Subjects:	Standards 1 and 2:	Standards 3, 4 and Form 1:	Form 2:
	Hrs. Mins.	Hrs. Mins.	Hrs. Mins.
Arithmetic	5 - 0	5 - 0	5 - 0
Reading & Poetry	2 - 30	2- 30	2 - 30
Writing	1 - 40	1 - 0	1 - 0
Spelling	1 - 40	1 - 0	1 - 0
English Grammar)	1 - 40	1 - 30	1 - 30
" Composition)		1 - 40	1 - 40
History		1 - 0	1 - 0
Geography		1 - 30	1 - 30
Drawing	1 - 30	1 - 30	1 - 30
Modelling	1 - 0		
Totals:	15 - 0	16 - 40	16 - 40

When, as is evident in the Correspondence School organization, the teachers' preparation of work is not dominated by the rigid restrictions of time-tables, a danger arises in a tendency to over-estimate the capacity of the pupils in certain subjects and so to upset the balance of the curriculum. A perusal of some "sets" of work selected at random convinced the writer that such a tendency is apparent, and that, in the absence of a definite time-table to which pupils should conform and by which teachers might regulate their assignments, there has crept in a disregard both by teachers and pupils of the prescribed time limitations for each subject. Consequently there would appear to be need for constant checking and revision of the assignments in the different subjects and for a strict supervision of the preparation of the fortnightly "sets" of work to ensure due recognition being given to each individual subject, and to avoid the undue encumbering of any particular assignment. Those pupils of the upper classes who obviously experience difficulty in covering the set work in the given time or who find that they are neglecting certain subjects, generally their weaker ones, are often advised to follow a suggested time-table which has been prepared; but strict adherence to this is not obligatory nor could any time-table be made so.

The Assignments of Work: The Correspondence system is, in general principle, very similar to the Dalton Plan though it differs from this in many important details:

(a) Like the Plan, the correspondence system expects the pupil, within certain time limits, to cover a minimum assignment of work in each subject of the curriculum. But, whereas the Dalton Plan has the teacher

always in attendance to guide and assist the pupil in his studies, the postal scheme keeps the teacher isolated from the pupil and places on him the responsibility of foreseeing difficulties and providing supplementary advice and tutorage in advance.

(b) The teacher under the Dalton Plan resorts at regular periods to group teaching but the correspondence course remains an individual method entirely.

(c) The Dalton system offers a milieu rich in reference works and suitable apparatus; the correspondence method has to rely on the meagre and generally unsuitable equipment of the home supplemented by the school circulating library and the usual school texts.

(d) Emulation, competition, and the commendation of fellow pupils stimulate the Dalton pupils to greater efforts; the Correspondence children must be content with what encouragement and sympathetic guidance is forthcoming from parents and teachers.

(e) The Correspondence defaulter cannot be disciplined as peremptorily nor as effectively as can the Dalton shirker.

The year's work for every class is divided into twenty "sets" of work each containing assignments representing a fortnight's work in all the subjects of the curriculum. The assignments are revised regularly, modified or added to as considered necessary, and, especially for the lower classes, are attractively and abundantly illustrated. As soon as the pupil has completed one set of work and despatched it for checking and marking to the school, he commences on the second set. Before he has completed this, but not always so, he will possibly have had his first set

returned to him marked and commented on by his teacher, and with it a personal letter to stimulate his interest and to encourage him in his efforts. For the middle and upper classes model answers to the exercises in many subjects are prepared by the teachers and sent to the pupils with their returned corrected sets. It is the general practice to require the pupils to send in corrections for work which contains any serious errors, and in certain cases careless or slipshod work is sent back to be repeated. Neglect to carry out instructions and to correct faulty work can be overcome by the teacher withholding all new work until that asked for has been received. Such action, however, appears seldom to have been resorted to as the general policy of the school seems to be and must be to encourage rather than to compel.

The majority of the pupils work regularly to the yearly programme for each successive class but the individual nature of the method allows for the promotion of pupils whenever they have so qualified. This practice is much more prevalent in the lower than in the higher classes and raises a problem for the teachers in that the year's work for those classes is based to a great extent on seasonal phenomena and activities. A child, therefore, entering a new class in springtime might find himself studying Nature's autumnal secrets throughout a series of correlated lessons.

The Certificate of Proficiency symbolises for the correspondence pupils as it does for all other primary school pupils, the consummation of their elementary scholastic efforts. The courses in the different subjects and the subjects themselves within the curriculum, tend to

be limited to the requirements of the examination for that certificate. It is the opinion of several of the Correspondence School teachers that the intensely practical attitude of many of their pupils who live in a world of useful labour and practicality, makes very evident the futility of teaching much that is contained within the Syllabus of Instruction.

The remoteness of many of the pupils from the headquarters of the School frequently occasions long delays in the transmission of work to and from the school (1) and makes the total time between the actual working of the lessons and their subsequent return to the pupil for correction much longer than is desirable. This is unavoidable and the only method of mitigating the difficulty appears to be by reducing to a minimum the time during which the work is held at the school for marking and checking by the teacher. With an inadequate staff such as there appears to be at present, the teachers, burdened with the responsibility of an excessive number of pupils are obliged either to return the pupils' work insufficiently annotated and checked, or to delay its return thereby permitting more thorough treatment of the pupils' efforts. The first of the alternatives would result in a regrettable lowering of the standard of the pupils' work; the second would occasion such delays as must lead to an inevitable accumulation of difficulties. The assignments of work within each successive fortnightly set are assumed to be arranged to provide for the progressive development of the prescribed subjects. Much of the content of any one "set" is the development of more fundamental work in the preceding set and can be fully comprehended only when the more

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(1) See Appendix B(v) page xi.

elementary principles are mastered. Should this mastery not be attained as is, of course, frequently the case, the pupil proceeds to the work of the second set with insufficient or faulty ideas and the result must be mental confusion and uncertainty. The eventual return of the former set with the teacher's explanation of the difficulties will perhaps put matters right but the delay doubtless has already made the problem more difficult for the child to solve. It is a fact that sometimes weeks elapse before the teacher is assured that certain difficulties have been solved by the pupil. One possible method of overcoming this weakness in the system would be by using only alternate sets wherein to make provision for the development of the more difficult principles of any subject. It would be slower in practice but would more readily ensure the fundamental matter being comprehended for it would give the teacher the opportunity of returning comments and guidance before the pupil proceeded with the more advanced lessons.

(C) THE TEACHER:

Information regarding the attitude of the teachers of the Correspondence School towards their work and of the conditions under which they carry on their duties must be considered as of great relevant value to this enquiry, for on them in a very large measure does the quality and the value of the instruction depend. The response of the pupils and their attitude towards the school are in many

ways the reflected attitude of the teachers themselves, and where close and enthusiastic co-operation exists between teachers and pupils, therein is to be found one of the greatest factors leading towards the success of an institution of this nature.

Prior to their present engagement, the greater number of the teachers now on the staff of the Correspondence School have had experience in ordinary classroom teaching; many of them have had teaching appointments in remote country schools. They are therefore in a position to voice opinions which should be of value to the investigation, and many of the opinions and much of the data presented in this section have been gleaned from the answers to a questionnaire [1] submitted to them. It is readily recognised that these are mere expressions of <u>opinion</u> and that they cannot be regarded as anything other than such. Nor are they so regarded. Nevertheless they do indicate attitudes of mind on the part of the Correspondence School teachers and these are of considerable importance in gauging the value of the institution. For this reason, although technically the procedure is not wholly sound, it has been employed .

<u>Nature of the Work</u>: An analysis of the information supplied by the present and one-time teachers of the Correspondence School indicates that the nature of the work may be summarized broadly as it affects the teacher (1) physically and (2) mentally.

One teacher in answer to the question referring to the fatigue factor (Question 4 of questionnaire) expressed her opinion thus: "Less tiring physically - more so mentally". The comments of the other teachers support this statement in stressing certain separate factors which

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[1] See Appendix C.1, (page (xiii)

have affected the individual teachers in different degrees.

(1) Physical Effects on the Teacher:

(a) The continual sitting, accompanied by sustained mental concentration, though making little demand on the muscular system has an inevitably detrimental effect on the nervous system especially when the work involves a constant strain on the eyes as it does in Correspondence teaching. The condition of physical tiredness felt during the last hour of the day's work was specifically attributed by one teacher to the excessive demand which the work makes on the eyes.

(b) The elimination of the problem of discipline was noted by several teachers who found the nervous strain of teaching by correspondence much less marked. The absence of noise, of the incessant restlessness of the children, of disturbance, of the little irritations of the classroom, of the rush from lesson to lesson, appealed to most of the teachers as a release from the "querulous attitude" so prevalent in the classroom. Several teachers, and it was noted that they were among the more experienced in correspondence work, made a distinction between the discipline of numbers in the classroom and the discipline of the individual at home. Disciplinary measures were considered to be just as necessary in the case of the individual at home as with the pupils grouped in the classroom, and to be much more difficult to apply. We are reminded in this connection:-

(i) of the time elapsing between the pupil's defection and the actual administering of reproof by the teacher;

(ii) of the limitations of written censure due to the greater difficulty of adequately conveying

feelings and attitudes by written expression;

(iii) of the close concern of the parents in all matters pertaining to the disciplining of their children.

The problem of discipline therefore appears to have become a mental difficulty rather than remaining largely a physical one; it presents a problem demanding considerable psychological insight and understanding of conditions.

(c) The absence of the physical, the moral and the mental stimulus emanating from participation in the activities of the playground was regretted by some of the teachers and the provision of short periods of exercise in the course of the day's work was advocated, particularly by some of the younger members of the staff.

(2) Mental Effects on the Teacher:

The outstanding characteristic of the correspondence method of teaching is the substitution of purely mental attitudes for many of the physical factors in the classroom methods. From the viewpoint of the child's welfare such substitution must be far from sufficient in the educational process and might result in harmful imposition of the severe mental effort. Likewise does it impose much mental strain on the teacher, a fact which has been emphasized in various ways by the teachers themselves. On the other hand, in addition to the relief from physical strain, many compensations are to be derived from certain mental attitudes which are a feature of the correspondence method.

We have already noted the transfer of the

disciplinary problem from a physical to a mental level. Many of the teachers have referred to the supreme difficulty of penetrating the mentality and the general attitude of the individual pupil towards the school work and towards the teacher. The necessity for keen insight and a sympathetic attitude on the part of the teacher is apparent and with them a concomitancy of abilities such as will stimulate response and effort on the part of the pupil.

Retardates: Particularly have teachers stressed the almost insuperable difficulties of arousing response by ordinary correspondence methods from dull and subnormal children. One concludes that if special classes are considered essential for these children in ordinary schools, even more is such a class necessary for the dullards of the Correspondence School. One teacher, formerly on the staff of the School wrote concerning the problem:-

> "It would seem that, until the scope of the work can be widened in order to provide for special assignments for this type of pupil, he must suffer through his limitations to a much greater extent than the same type of pupil who is taught by classroom methods."

Many of the teachers admit that such pupils are their greatest problems and are responsible for much of the severe mental strain involved in the work.

The Parent: The participation of the parent in the teaching process provides further difficulty for some of the teachers. In the lower classes the active support and close co-operation of the parents are necessary. The teacher then has a double attitude to maintain - one towards the parent and one towards the pupil.

Many parents are too busy to offer much help, some lack interest, or ability to teach their children; some are unable to grasp the modern methods of the teacher and confuse the pupil by imposing obsolete methods; others assist too much, or are unable to control their children; yet the teacher is expected to adapt her own mental attitude to meet and call forth response from as many parents as she has pupils in her class.

Preparation of Lessons: The organization of the teaching staff of the School allows several teachers for each grade of pupils. Only the senior teacher of each grade, however, is called upon to prepare the assignments for that section. This method then requires the other teachers to sacrifice something of their own originality and skill in the presentation of lessons, and to accept methods and matter of which they might disapprove. Such divorce from the actual preparation of the lessons and from the planning of the different courses of study must tend to devitalize the teaching process from the teachers' point of view and to suppress within them the development of a valuable experiential asset.

From the teachers' viewpoint compensating features of the work are:-

(i) The friendly spirit which exists between teachers and pupils, probably the most pleasing and certainly the most commented on by the teachers;

(ii) The responsiveness and appreciation of children and parents;

(iii) The close association of the members of the teaching staff and the co-operation among them;

(iv) The opportunity for adopting new and

individual methods;

(v) The co-operation of the parents.

Factors such as these develop mental attitudes which the teachers recognise as counterbalancing the demands made on their mentality by the more exhausting problems of the work.

It is interesting to note that of the twenty-one teachers, only five found the work on the whole more fatiguing than classroom teaching, eight decided definitely that it was less so, several distinguished between the physical strain of the classroom and the mental demands of correspondence methods, and two or three gave no opinion. One teacher made a further interesting distinction in that correspondence teaching is"less fatiguing hour by hour,but more tiring week by week. The quick changes in class teaching reinvigorates one - a hard lesson tires, but this does not last long".

(A) Qualities demanded by Correspondence Methods of Teaching:

The summary given below analyses the replies given by teachers who have had experience in both classroom and correspondence work, in answer to questions 2 and 3 of the Questionnaire.[1] Eighteen of the twenty-one teachers who sent in replies were, at the time of answering, on the staff of the Correspondence School. The qualities actually named by the individual teachers would, taken separately, make a long list, so for convenience they have been arranged in groups according to characteristic similarity. The numbers indicate the total times the qualities within each group were named:

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[1] See Appendix C (1).- (page xiii)

(a) Interest, sympathy, insight: (mentioned 18 times).

(b) Tact and patience: " 12 "

(c) Energy, resourcefulness, imagination: " 12 "

(d) Capacity for written expression: " 7 "

(e) Accuracy, method, logical thinking: " 7 "

(f) Experience of backblock conditions: " 5 "

(g) Artistic ability, neatness: " 4 "

Other qualities stressed by fewer teachers were concentration, strong common sense, and a capacity for appraising the parents' point of view.

Most of the teachers appreciated the difficulty of deciding whether or not the correspondence method demanded a greater degree of teaching ability, only nine being convinced that it did so while five were definitely of the opinion that it required less. The remainder either gave no decision one way or the other or offered qualified comments pointing out the distinctive factors which make the technique so vastly different from that of classroom teaching. [1]

While it is the majority opinion of the teachers that the work calls, in many respects, for teaching ability of a higher order, it cannot be denied that all the qualities particularly mentioned in the above list are no less desirable in the equipment of the classroom teacher. The individual nature of the work, and the circumstances and conditions under which it is carried on probably cause the teachers to realise more truly the value of these qualities, and at the same time offer greater opportunities

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[1] See Appendix C2 -

for their use in the teaching process.

(B) The Teaching of the Different Subjects:

As might be anticipated, it has been noted by the teachers of the School that in certain subjects it is more difficult to secure good results by postal tuition than it is by classroom methods. Some subjects on the other hand appear to require less effort on the part of the teacher. Opinions offered in answer to questions 6 and 7 of the Questionnaire may be summarized thus:-

(a) There was unanimity of opinion that better results are obtained in Composition by correspondence; results in Reading and Formal English were also considered by the majority of the teachers to be more satisfactory by this method.

(b) A unanimous decision was given in favour of classroom methods for the treatment of Arithmetic; while general opinion favoured the classroom also in the subjects Spelling, Geography, Drawing, Nature Study and Handwork.

(c) In regard to the other subjects of the curriculum the teachers were unable to submit any generally acceptable estimate.

(C) Conditions of Work:

A study of the methods by which the teaching staff is organized and of the conditions under which it is functioning might well come under consideration when an evaluation of the efficiency of the work accomplished within a school is being undertaken. It should be noted that such an enquiry was especially sought by the New Zealand Educational Institute in the interests not only of the teachers but more particularly of the pupils who

were to be served by the institution.

The conditions governing the staffing of the School will determine within broad limits the type of teacher to be attracted to the ranks of the staff, and cover such considerations as:-

(a) size of classes;

(b) hours of work;

(c) salary scales;

(d) opportunities for promotion.

What influence these factors have on the efficiency of the staff and indirectly on the quality of the instruction being offered to the pupils will be analysed in a series of comparisons between the conditions under which correspondence teachers work and those governing the work of the teachers in the ordinary schools.

(a) Size of Classes: The recommendation of the Wells' Report (see page 13) suggested a competent teacher for every fifty pupils in the Standard classes of the Correspondence School. Since the presentation of the Report, needlecraft has been added to the curriculum and a specialist teacher appointed to supervise the instruction in that subject. No recommendation regarding the size of the infants' classes was included in the Report and staffing has been allowed on the basis of one teacher for every 100 pupils in those classes. For the Standard classes a graduated scale of staffing has been instituted as shown in the Table D (i).

TABLE D (i) - Showing:-
(a) the official estimate,
(b) the teachers' estimates,
of the maximum number of pupils that can be effectively dealt with in the different classes; and (c) the actual numbers being taught therein.

(a) Class:	S.1.	S.2.	S.3.	S.4.	Form 1.	Form 2.
(b) Official maximum number of pupils:	75	75	50	40	30	30
(c) Teachers' estimates of number able to be taught:	75-80	65-70	45-55	35-44	30-35	28-33
(d) Actual numbers at present in classes:	80-96	89-94	57-62	47-54	39-42	38-48

TABLE D (ii) - Showing:-
(a) average number of pupils in Correspondence School classes and
(b) average number of pupils in classes in city schools.

(a) Correspondence School:

Average roll of classes (Stds.1-Form 2). 56 pupils.

Average class per teacher " " " " 53 "
(including sewing Instructress).

Average class over whole school 62 "
(including infants).

(b) City Schools: [1]

Grade VI (361-480 pupils). 44 "

Grade VII (480-) pupils). 41 "

As a comparison the figures[2] for the Australian

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[1] 1932 figures: Report, 1933.

[2] 1930 figures from "Primary Education by Correspondence" - K.S. Cunningham. - page 30

Correspondence Schools are interesting:

	Average Number of Pupils per Teacher (actual).
Queensland.	64
New South Wales.	53
Victoria.	69
Tasmania.	32
South Australia.	46
Western Australia.	46
Average of total:	55

It would be misleading to apply the regulations for the staffing of public primary schools to the staffing of the Correspondence School. These provide for the appointment after a certain average roll number has been reached of an extra assistant teacher for every increase of forty pupils in average attendance. In most schools there is a degree of uniformity in the size of all classes from the Primer classes to Form 2. In correspondence teaching, however, the following factors must be taken into consideration:-

(i) Young pupils require constant guidance and supervision by an adult. In the early stages the actual teaching must be done by the supervisor within the home - the correspondence teacher merely planning the work, advising on method, and encouraging the pupil.

(ii) In the upper classes more reliance may be placed on the unassisted efforts of the pupil at home,

and the classes approximate in numbers more closely to the class rolls of ordinary schools.

(iii) Several subjects such as Music, Manual Instruction, and Physical Training, dealt with in ordinary schools are omitted from the curriculum of the Correspondence School.

(iv) All the pupils of the Correspondence School do not return work for checking regularly; hence the roll numbers are not truly indicative of the work actually being covered by the teachers. Some teachers, however, have commented on the fact that the backward and slower pupils take up a much greater proportion of their time, even allowing for less work being done, than do the brighter pupils.

It is interesting to note that the teachers' own estimates of maximum roll numbers for Standard classes approximate closely to the fifty per teacher recommended by Mr. Wells, and this seems to be a reasonable number to accept.

In the event of the extension of the curriculum to bring it more into line with the Syllabus of Instruction, the scale of staffing should be subject to revision in order to make allowance for such further demands on the time of the teachers.

(b) Hours of Work: The working hours observed by the teaching staff of the Correspondence School are:-

		Total:
Monday to Friday	(8.30 a.m.- 12.30 p.m.	20 hours.
	(1.30 p.m.- 4.30 p.m.	15 "
Saturday	8.30 a.m.- 11.30 a.m.	3 "
	Total:	38 "

The Correspondence teachers are engaged in their duties for 38 hours spread over 5½ days in the week; the teachers in the ordinary schools are on duty actually for 25-26 hours over a five-day week. Although this represents for the Correspondence teachers an excess of as much as 50 per cent over the working hours of the other teachers, this difference must be discounted by the average amount of extra time which the classroom teacher spends in the preparation of lessons, in checking pupils' exercises and in supervisory duties.

Referring again to the considered opinions of the teachers: [1]

(a) Four teachers were convinced that the hours were not excessive.

(b) Twelve favoured a six-hour day instead of the present seven hours.

(c) Two advocated a five-day week with no reduction of the length of the working day.

(d) One proposed a half-day on Wednesday as well as on Saturday.

(e) Two former members of the staff thought that five hours daily should be the maximum.

Several teachers referred to a real feeling of fatigue evident from 3.30 p.m. till the end of the day; one or two admitted a similar condition from about 12 noon to 12.30 p.m.. One teacher commented on the fact that he refrained from making comments on the work of his pupils after 3.30 p.m. and postponed doing so until the next morning when he experienced an entirely different attitude towards the pupils' efforts.

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[1] Questionnaire: Appendix C (1) No. 5.- **page xiii**

It is probable that the number of hours per week could be considerably reduced without impairing materially the efficiency of the work; indeed, that by so doing, much more effective work would be accomplished. A six-hour day would seem to be a reasonable demand on the teacher although it is significant that in the Australian Correspondence Schools "the teachers attend the school each day for the ordinary school hours". [1]

(c) Salary Scales: Remuneration is the factor which operates probably most effectually in influencing a teacher when applying for and accepting new positions. It is a broadly acceptable principle that the higher the salaries offered for particular positions the more capable and experienced will be the applicants for those positions. The immediate remuneration is not the only monetary consideration however, for promotion must be safeguarded and this may be calculated:

(i) by the extent of the yearly salary increments;

(ii) by the prospects offered by one position for advancement to a higher one.

The salaries and range of increments offered for the different grades of positions will generally be a sufficient indication of the professional standing and of the qualifications of the applicants attracted to the positions. The extent of the provision made for the remuneration of the staff and for the promotion of the individual members will be studied in this section, and an estimate made of the effect this has on the efficiency of the school.

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1. "Primary Education by Correspondence", page 15, - K.S. Cunningham.

TABLE E - Showing Total Annual Salaries paid: (a) to the Staff of each of Five of the largest City Schools in Wellington;[2] (b) to the staff of the Correspondence School,[3] and also the average Salary per teacher: (i) for the Five City Schools, (ii) for the Correspondence School.

School:	Number on Teaching Staff:	Total Salaries: £. s. d.
A	13	3375 - 13 - 6
B	11	3012 - 1 - 6
C	12	3165 - 15 - 0
D	14	3629 - 14 - 0
E	13	3314 - 9 - 6
Totals: 5 schools.	65	16497 - 13 - 6
Correspondence School.	22	4457 - 11 - 3
Average salary per assistant teacher: (i) City schools:		261 - 17 - 4
(ii) Correspondence School:		202 - 12 - 4
Difference:		59 - 5 - 0

The salaries for the staffs of the city schools are, on the average, 29 per cent higher than are the salaries for the teachers of the primary staff of the Correspondence School.

2. 1932 figures prepared by State Department of Education.

3. 1932-33 figures.

TABLE F - Indicating the Scale of Salaries:
(1) of the Staff (Assistant Teachers only) of the Correspondence School,
(2) of the Staff (Assistant Teachers only) of a Top Grade City School (480 - pupils).

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(1) Correspondence School:

Assistant Teachers:	Minimum Annual Salary:	Maximum Annual Salary:	Range of Increments:
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
(a) 1 male (Senior)	307 - 16 - 0.	324 - 0 - 0.	16 - 4 - 0.
(b) 4 assistants	209 - 9 - 6.	243 - 0 - 0.	33 - 10 - 6.
(c) 3 assistants	162 - 9 - 0.	192 - 7 - 6.	29 - 18 - 6.
(d) 13 assistants	136 - 16 - 0.	175 - 5 - 6.	38 - 9 - 6.

(2) Grade VII City School:

(Married allowances for male teachers included in maximum salaries and increments).

Assistant Teachers:	Minimum Annual Salary:	Maximum Annual Salary:	Range of Increments:
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£ s. d.
(a) 1 Grade III male.	243 - 0 - 0.	356 - 8 - 0.	113 - 8 - 0.
1 Grade III female.	230 - 17 - 0.	303 - 15 - 0.	72 - 18 - 0.
(b) 1 Grade II male.	196 - 13 - 0.	315 - 18 - 0.	119 - 5 - 0.
3 Grade II females.	175 - 5 - 6.	259 - 4 - 0.	83 - 18 - 6.
(c) 1 Grade I male.	136 - 16 - 0.	255 - 3 - 0.	118 - 7 - 0.
2 Grade I females.	119 - 14 - 0.	200 - 18 - 6.	81 - 4 - 6.

From a study of the above table it will be

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noted:-

(i) That married allowances are not paid to Correspondence School teachers while teachers in ordinary schools receive them;

(ii) That no distinction is made between the male and the female salaries in the Correspondence School;

(iii) That the range of increments within each group is much greater in the scale for ordinary schools than in the Correspondence School scale;

(iv) That there is no provision in the Correspondence School scale for the gradation of salaries from one group to the next higher.

It has been found impossible to make an entirely competent and reliable estimate of the relative teaching difficulties inherent in the two methods and of the demands made by both on the capacity of the teachers. We should, nevertheless, be justified in acknowledging that the correspondence method presents to the teachers problems at least as difficult of solution as those of the ordinary classroom teachers and further, that the abilities and energy of the teachers are just as much in demand. Allowing for the additional calls on the time of the classroom teacher, the correspondence teacher remains at a disadvantage regarding the hours of work. Added to this, the lower rates of salary and the more limited means of promotion afforded the correspondence teachers must have the effect of keeping the quality of the instruction lower than what it might be were their conditions of employment similar to those of the ordinary school teachers.

CHAPTER THREE.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE RESULTS OBTAINED BY THE APPLICATION OF ATTAINMENT TESTS, AND AN ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE FORM TWO PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION,1932.

A. THE APPLICATION OF ATTAINMENT TESTS.

The survey that has been made in Chapter II of the conditions and influences affecting the pupil, the teacher and the syllabus of instruction, provides insufficient justification for regarding Correspondence schooling as being inferior to that received in the small country schools. In many respects, as for instance the suitability of the working environment, the latter is probably, in most instances, more beneficial but the Correspondence method would, generally, seem to be more effective.

It now becomes necessary to compare the results of the two methods of schooling, as far as this is measurable. For this purpose it was decided to employ a series of attainment tests in the subjects of the curriculum, and to submit them to representative children enrolled respectively in the small country schools and in the Correspondence School.

(a) The Material for the Tests.

Assuming that the nature of the system under which they were being taught would place the pupils of the Correspondence School at an advantage over the pupils in the country schools' group in tests requiring

much written expression, the investigator thought it advisable to choose tests which would make little demand on ability in written expresion. Dr. Burt's "Northumberland Tests in English" were chosen as they required in answering, merely the marking or underlining of words. The Northumberland Tests in Arithmetic were also used. The Tests in History and Geography were drawn up by the writer who revised the drafts after submitting them to both Correspondence teachers and other practising teachers for comment and criticism. They followed the Northumberland plan of requiring no written expression in answering. The questions were based on prescriptions for the different classes as outlined in the Syllabus of Instruction issued by the State Department of Education. Tests in Composition and Drawing were arranged also along similar lines after consultation with practising and experienced teachers in the Correspondence and ordinary primary schools. For the purpose of our inquiry standardised tests were not considered essential though conformity to the Syllabus of Instruction was most important for the tests were to enquire into the relative scholastic attainments of the two groups within the limits of the Syllabus and in the subjects demanded as the necessary minimum primary education.

Selected Northumberland Tests and the tests in History and Geography involved purely mechanical marking but Composition, Writing and Drawing demanded experienced examiners to assess the results. The Composition and Writing were "marked"

by an ex-headmaster and inspector of schools, the Drawing by a practising specialist teacher. Neither of these examiners was given any indication of the purpose of the tests and all signs of identification of papers were removed before marking.

Copies of the test papers set will be found in Appendix A.

(b) Selection of Pupils to whom the Tests were applied.

(i) Correspondence School.

It was realized by the investigator that it would be impracticable to apply tests to the pupils of the Correspondence School which would be entirely reliable in their results. Apart from any weaknesses in the tests themselves, there remained the difficulty of ensuring the rigid observance of the conditions under which they should be applied. The results from the pupils of the country schools should be accepted as reasonably reliable for the tests would be applied in most instances by responsible teachers who had had experience in the testing of children; but those from the Correspondence pupils could not so readily be considered as dependable. In order to minimize the degree of unreliability, a special check was made of all Correspondence pupils. The selection of pupils who were to receive the tests was made from the names of those pupils in standard classes who had had all their schooling by correspondence. In the upper standard classes, on account of the relatively few pupils in this category, children were selected who had had at least all their

"standard" instruction by correspondence. From this list, the teachers were asked to indicate those pupils coming from homes which, in their opinion, were unreliable from the standpoint of supervision for, as it was necessary to rely on the parents to apply the tests, strict honesty and reliability were most desirable.

The purged list was further reduced by equalizing the numbers selected from each class. In the upper classes all the pupils left were selected but in the lower classes every second, or every third, perhaps only every fourth was selected according to the number of children from which to draw in each class. This reduced the number of pupils from each class to approximately the same number, namely about 18. It will be seen from the tabulated results that not all of these returned tests.

TABLE G (i) indicating the number of pupils (Correspondence School) in each age group and their classification:

Classification	Age 8	Age 9	Age 10	Age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Total in each class.
Standard 1	10	1					11
" 2	3	5	1	1			10
" 3	1	5	6	3	1	1	17
" 4		1	5	5	3		14
Form 1			1	6	3	3	13
Form 2					5	4	9
Total in each group:	14	12	13	15	12	8	Total: 74

(ii) Country Schools of Grade 0 (1 - 8 pupils) and Grade I (9 - 21 pupils).

The return from remote country schools of sufficient tests from which to draw a reasonably satisfactory comparison presented some difficulty. The tests were to be applied only to those pupils who had never attended schools of grade higher than Grade I. They were forwarded to schools chosen at random from the lists of Grade 0 and Grade I schools secured from the State Education Department, and including schools in the majority of Education Districts throughout New Zealand. All Grade 0 schools in those districts were selected and only the smaller Grade I schools. There was no guarantee of course that the different age groups would be represented in even approximately equal numbers. Actually, as will be seen from the table, the result and figures for all the age groups, except the lowest were very similar.

TABLE G (ii) indicating the number of pupils (Grade 0 and Grade I schools) in each age group and their classification:

Classification	Age 8	Age 9	Age 10	Age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Total in each class.
Standard 1	3						3
" 2	4	3					7
" 3		7	3	3			13
" 4			6	5			11
Form 1			5	2	7	2	16
Form 2				3	6	11	20
Total in each group:	7	10	14	13	13	13	Total: 70

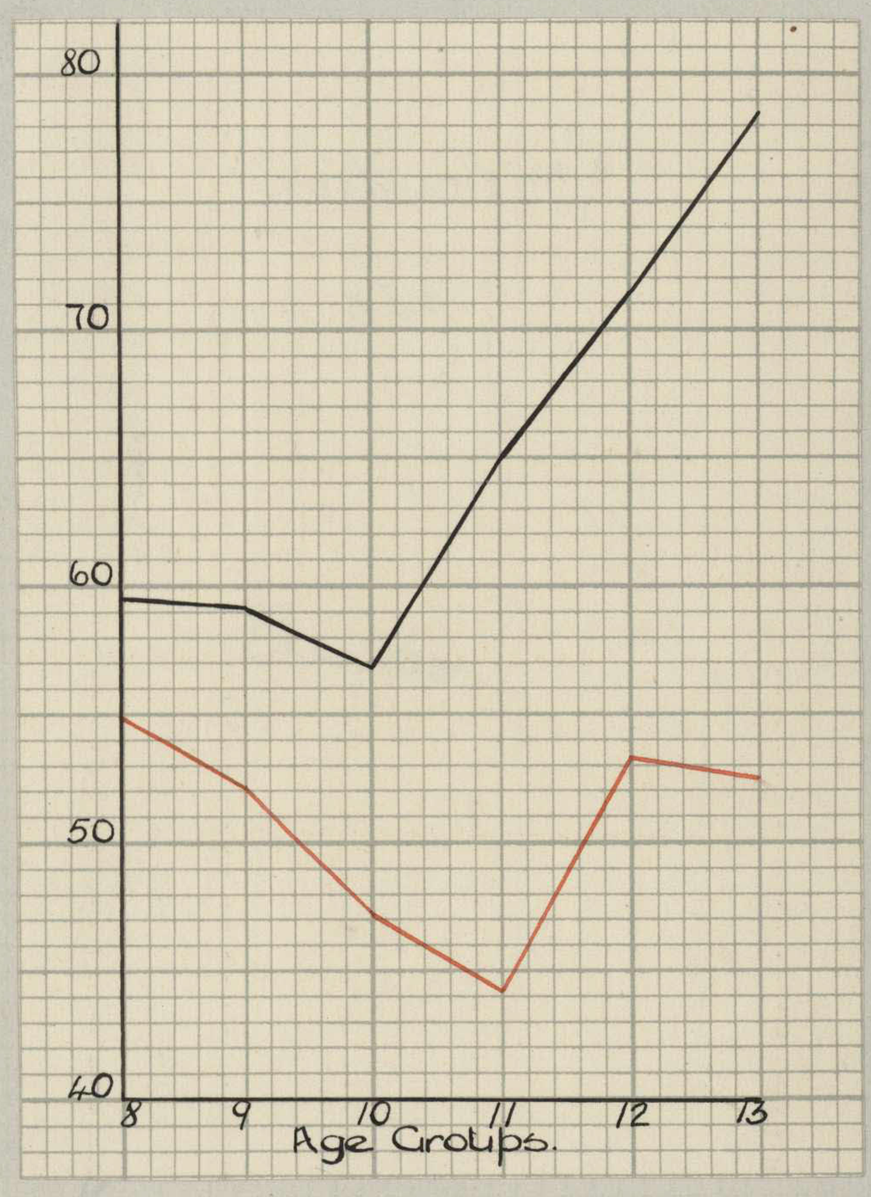
RESULTS OF THE TESTS.

It is acknowledged that the numbers dealt with in the different age groups are insufficient for purposes of generalizing on the results of the tests. They are, however, adequate to indicate general tendencies regarding the relative attainments of the pupils instructed under the two distinct systems of schooling.

The tables and graphs which follow show the average scores in each of the subjects tested for the different age groups of the two types of school.

TABLE H (i). COMPOSITION.*

Age Group	Corres. School	Country Schools.	Difference
8 yrs	59·4	59·4	4·5
9	59·2	52·1	7·1
10	56·9	47·1	9·8
11	65·0	44·3	20·7
12	71·4	53·3	18·1
13	78·4	52·5	25·9
Average Score	64·2	50·3	13·9

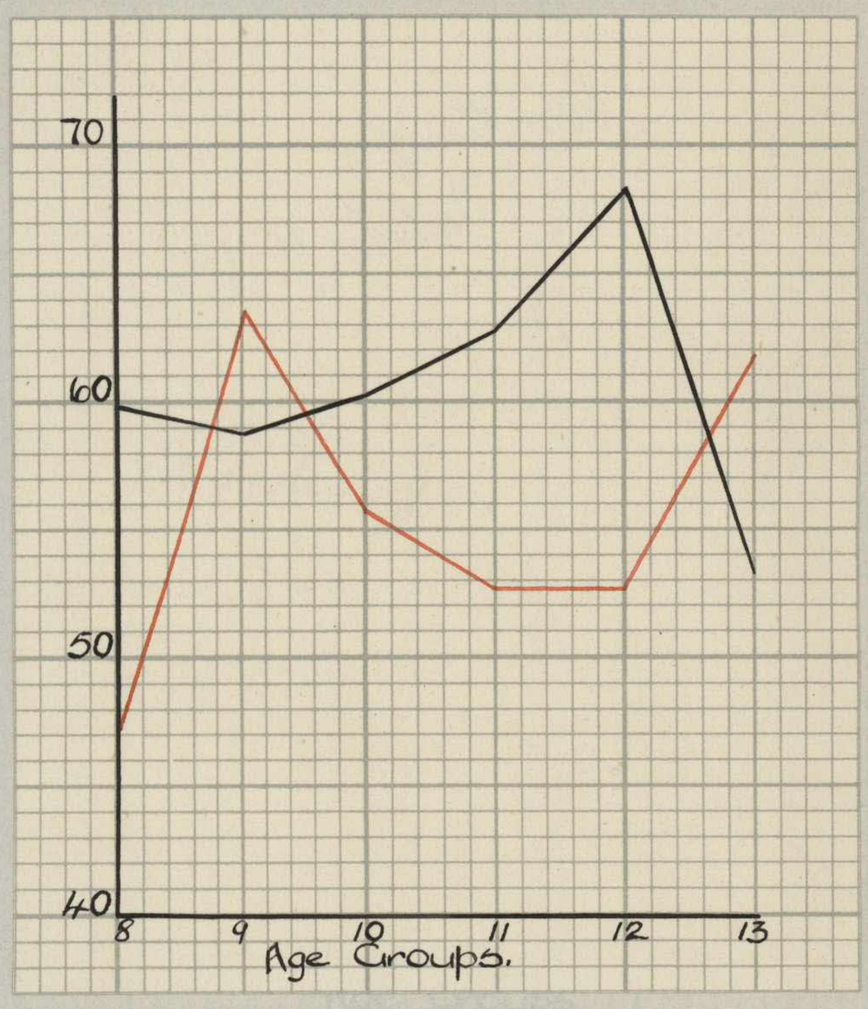


Correspondence School results ——
Country Schools' results ——

* The scores in the subjects Composition and Writing were assessed by an examiner who "marked" according to a different standard for each age group. The results then are comparative as between two similar age groups but not as between one age group and the next. In all other subjects the results are marked on the same standard throughout and the score of each age group offers comparison with that of any other group.

TABLE H (ii) - WRITING.*

Age Group	Corres. School	Country Schools	Difference
8 yrs	59·8	47·1	12·7
9	58·9	63·3	-4·4
10	60·2	55·8	4·4
11	62·7	52·7	10·0
12	68·3	52·7	15·6
13	53·3	61·7	-8·4
Average Score	60·8	55·9	4·9



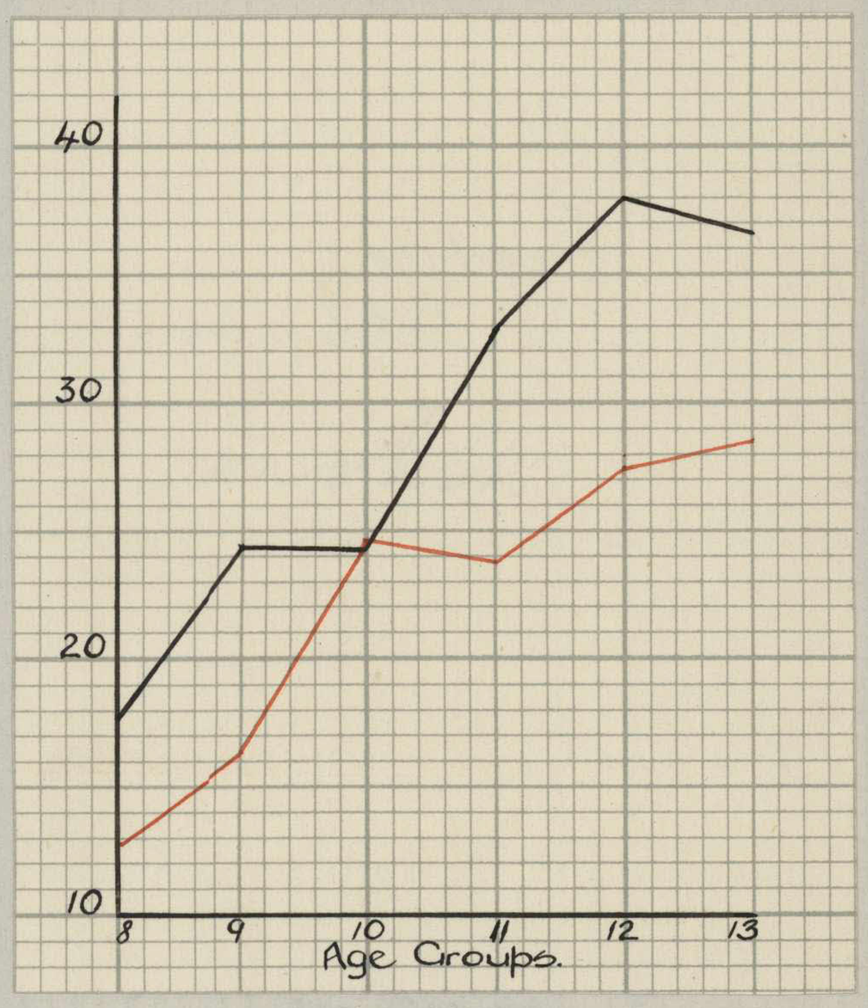
Correspondence School results ——

Country Schools' results ——

* See note previous page.

TABLE H (iii) - ENGLISH.

Age Group.	Corres. School	Country Schools	Difference
8 yrs.	17·9	12·9	5·0
9	24·4	16·4	8·0
10	24·3	24·5	-0·2
11	32·9	23·9	9·0
12	38·0	27·5	10·5
13	36·6	28·6	8·0
Average Score.	28·3	23·3	5·0

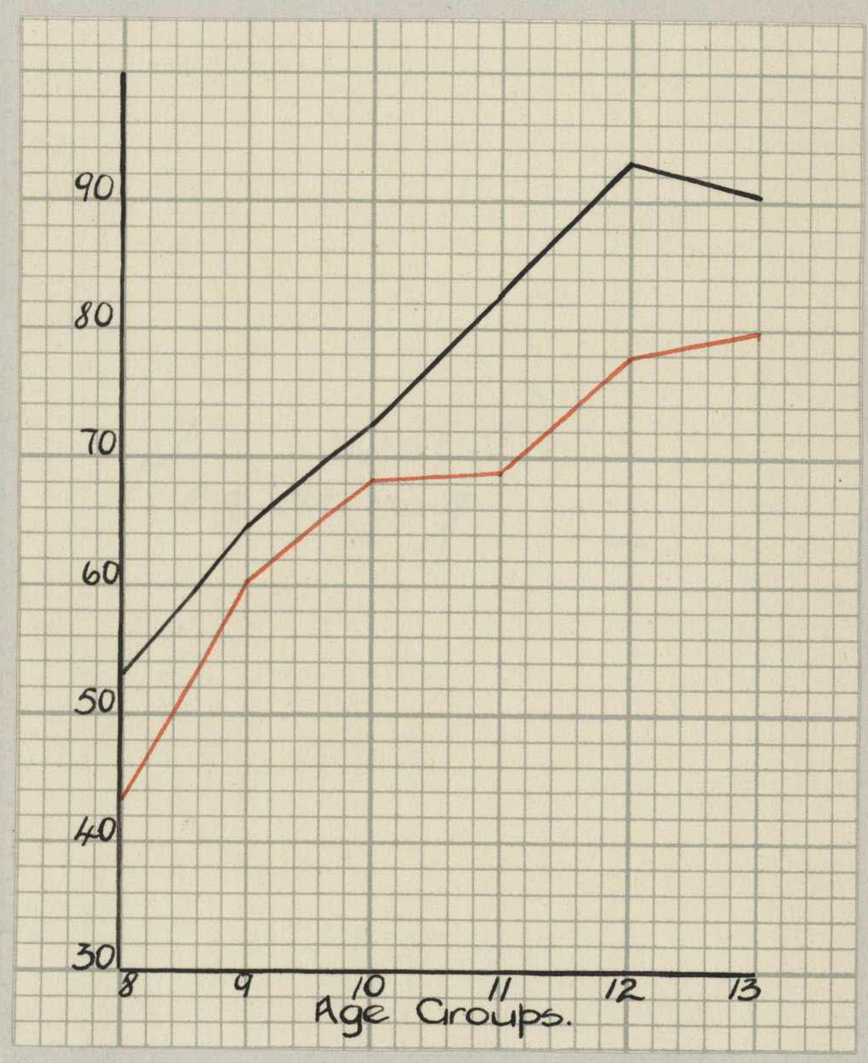


Correspondence School results ——

Country Schools' results ——

TABLE H (iv) - READING.

Age Group	Corres. School	Country Schools	Difference
8 yrs.	53·8	43·5	10·3
9	64·7	55·5	9·2
10	72·5	68·2	4·3
11	82·9	68·8	14·1
12	93·3	77·9	15·4
13	90·5	79·4	11·1
Average Score.	74·8	68·1	6·7

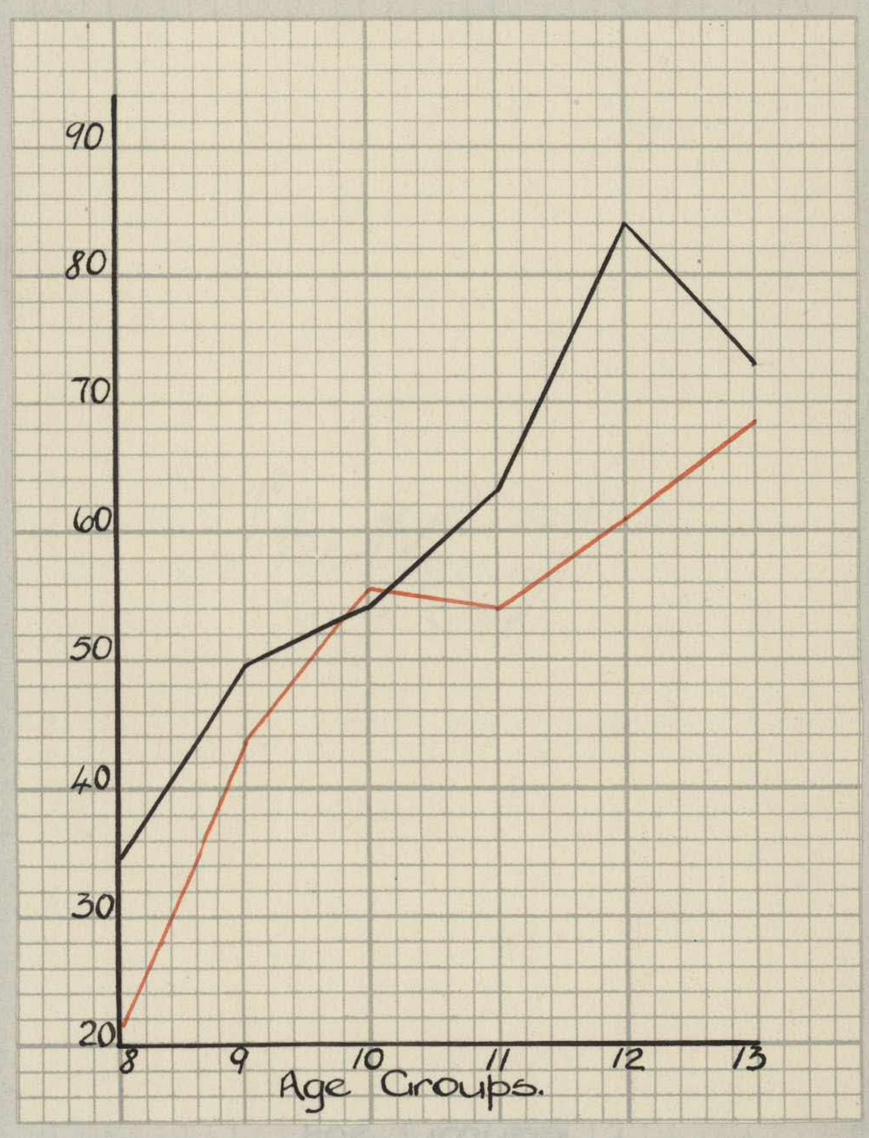


Correspondence School results ——

Country Schools' results ——

TABLE H (v) - SPELLING.

Age Group	Corres. School	Country Schools	Difference
8 yrs	34·6	21·7	12·9
9	49·4	43·5	5·9
10	54·0	55·4	-1·4
11	63·3	54·0	9·3
12	84·0	60·7	23·3
13	73·0	68·5	4·5
Average Score	58·2	53·8	4·4

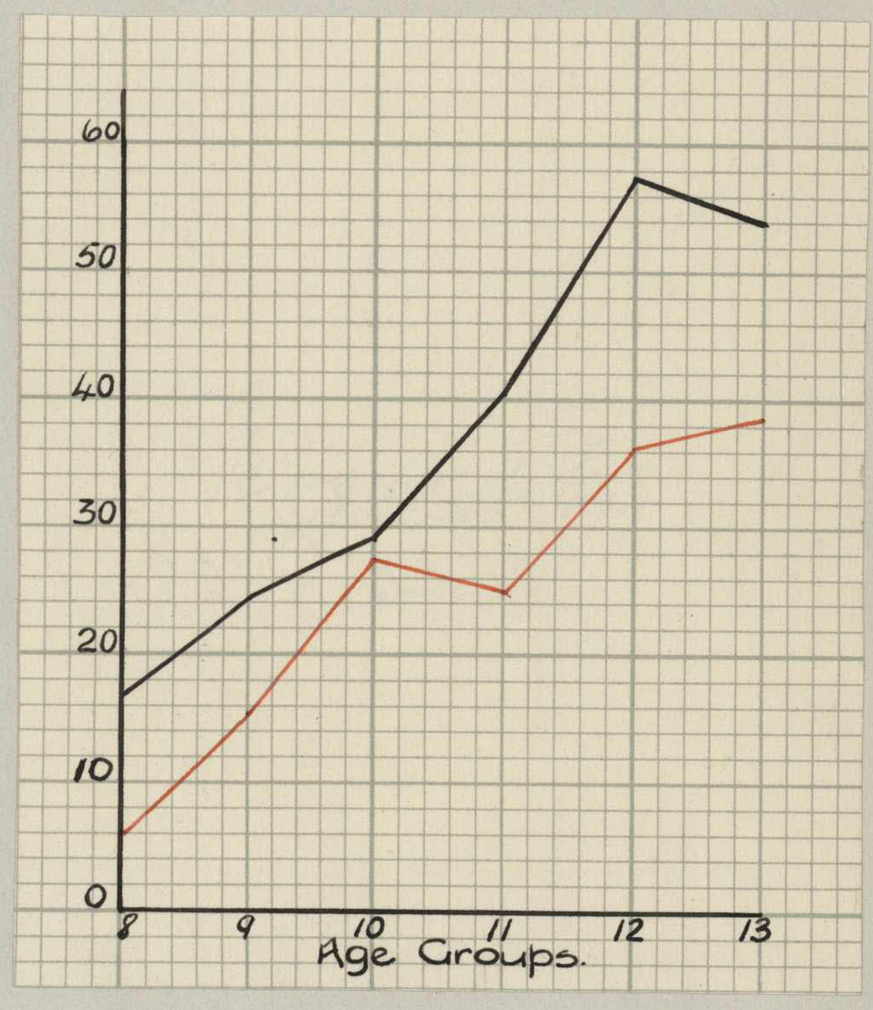


Correspondence School results ——

Country Schools' results ——

TABLE H (vi) - GEOGRAPHY.

Age Group	Corres. School.	Country Schools	Difference
8 yrs.	17·1	6·0	11·1
9	24·4	15·5	8·9
10	29·1	27·8	1·3
11	40·3	25·5	14·8
12	57·6	36·1	21·5
13	54·0	38·6	15·4
Average Score	37·7	27·5	10·2

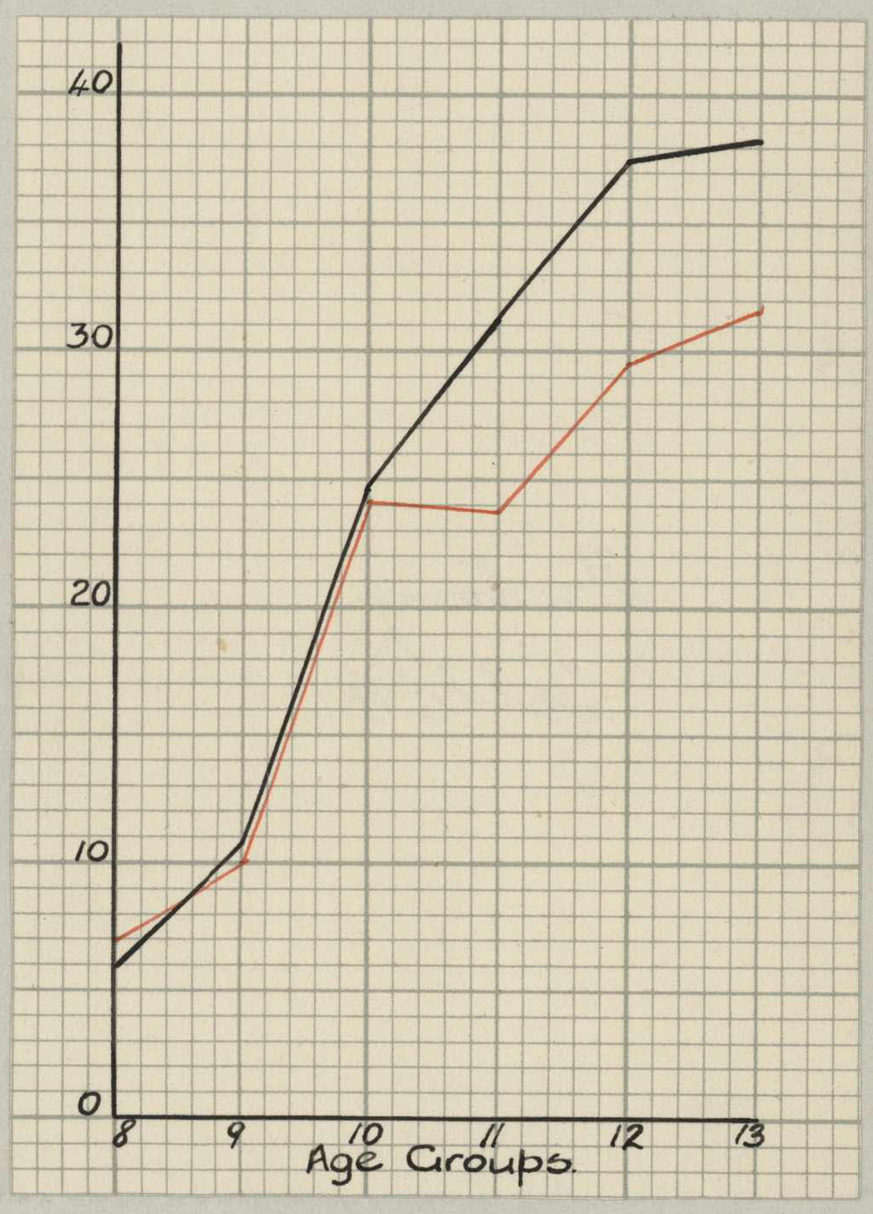


Correspondence School results ——

Country Schools' results ——

TABLE H (vii) - HISTORY.

Age Group	Corres. School	Country Schools.	Difference
8 yrs.	6·0	7·0	-1·0
9	10·7	10·0	·7
10	24·7	24·1	·6
11	31·2	23·7	7·5
12	37·4	29·6	7·8
13	38·2	31·6	6·6
Average Score	26·4	23·4	3·0

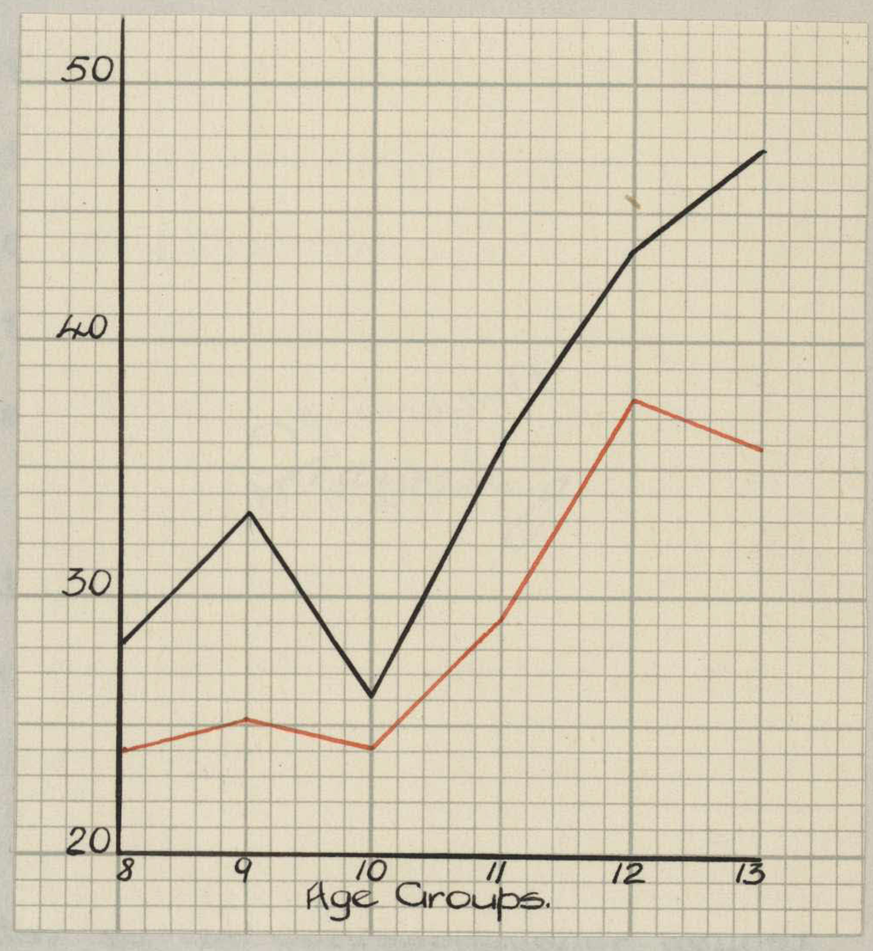


Correspondence School results ——

Country Schools' results ——

TABLE H (viii) - DRAWING.

Age Group	Corres. School	Country Schools	Difference
8 yrs	28·1	24·0	4·1
9	33·3	25·1	8·2
10	26·1	24·1	2·0
11	36·0	29·3	6·7
12	43·6	37·8	5·8
13	47·5	36·8	10·7
Average Score	34·8	30·2	4·6

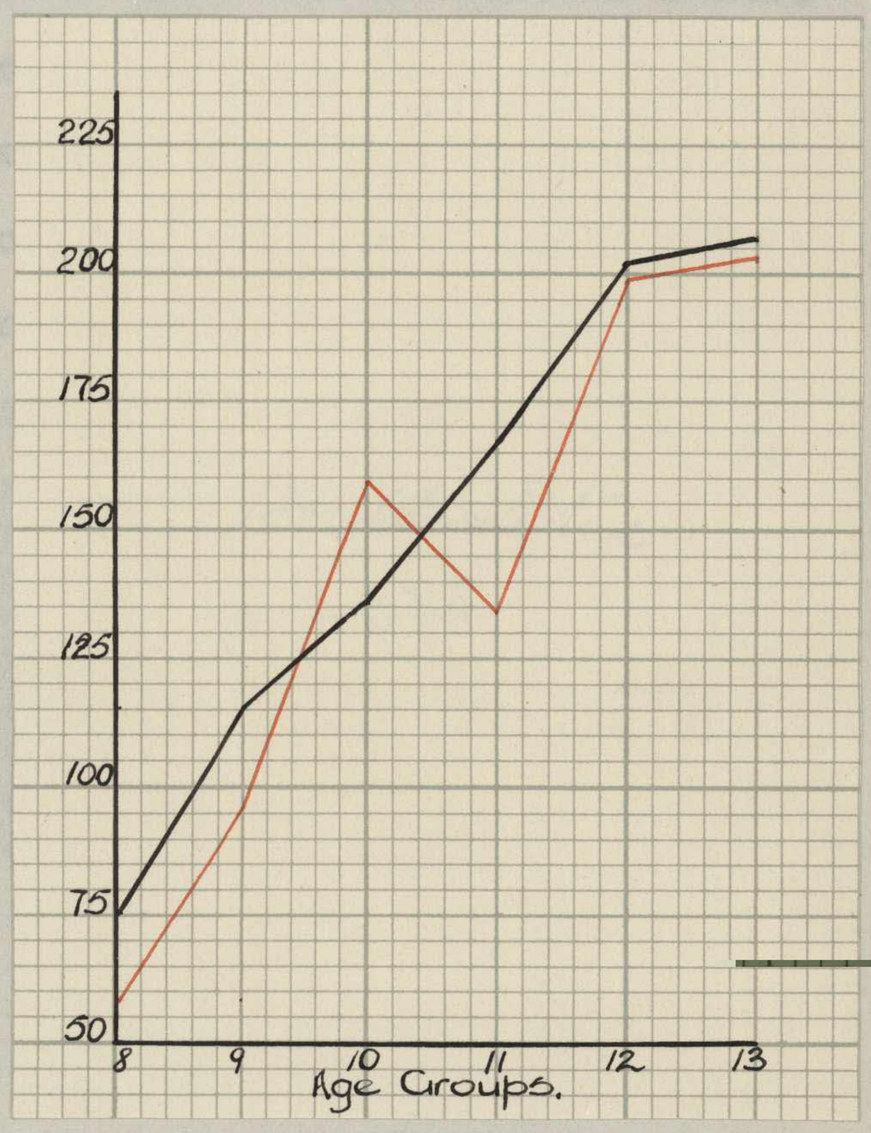


Correspondence School results ——

Country Schools' results ——

TABLE H (ix) - ARITHMETIC.

Age Group	Corres. School.	Country Schools	Difference
8 yrs.	75·8	58·8	17·0
9	116·5	96·5	20·0
10	136·7	155·8	-19·1
11	168·0	134·5	33·5
12	202·8	197·5	5·3
13	207·9	203·4	4·5
Average Score	145·4	147·9	-2·5



Correspondence School results ——

Country Schools' results ——

General Observations from a study of the Tabulated Results and Graphs.

(a) The average scores of the Correspondence pupils in all subjects except Arithmetic are higher than are those of the country school children.

(b) The average scores of the final age group of the Correspondence School are higher than are those of the final age group of the country schools in all subjects other than Writing.

(c) The age-10 group is the weakest of the Correspondence School groups whereas the age-11 group is the weakest of the country schools groups.

(d) Progress appears steadier in the Correspondence School groups after the age-10 group has been passed while in the country schools groups it is more regular before the age of 11, though the numbers involved scarcely warrant pronouncement.

(e) Throughout, the Correspondence results indicate a more constant rate of progress from group to group than do those of the country schools.

(f) The Correspondence School results in the tested subjects show a superiority over those of the classroom to the degree (percentage) shown in the following list:

Geography	37	percent	superiority
Composition	27	"	"
English	21	"	"
Drawing	15	"	"
History	12	"	"
Reading	9	"	"
Writing	8	"	"
Spelling	8	"	"
Arithmetic	1.7	"	inferiority.

CONCLUSIONS.

From an examination of the results of the attainment tests submitted to the pupils of the Correspondence School and to those of Grade O and Grade I, there is no evidence that the scholastic ability of the pupils taught by correspondence is in any way inferior to that of pupils of remote country schools. On the contrary, in all subjects tested, except in Arithmetic, the general results were emphatically in favour of the Correspondence method; and even in Arithmetic the final result showed a slight superiority.

B. A FURTHER COMPARISON: Proficiency Examination Results for 1932.

As stated in an earlier reference, page 57, the conditions under which the tests were applied were considered to be such as would make it necessary to accept the results with some reservation. For purposes of verification, it has been thought advisable to check the results by making a further comparison of the marks secured in the 1932 Form 2 Proficiency Examination

(a) by pupils of the Correspondence School,

(b) by pupils of remote country schools (Grade 0 and Grade I),

and (c) by pupils of a typical average city school (Wellington) - school nominated by the Senior Inspector of Schools.

In this examination all candidates' papers are marked or checked by an independent Inspector of Schools

TABLE I (i): Summary of the average Results of the 1932 Form 2 Proficiency Examination:

	(a)	(b)	(c)
Subjects	Corres.School	Country Schools	City School
Language & Compos.	66.5	62.7	65.9
Formal English	41.7	37.2	37.1
Spelling	17.2	11.5	20.6
Writing	16.8	17.	16.2
Arithmetic	72.9	72.2	73.
Average Total Marks	219.4	200.8	212.8
Average Age:	13 yrs. 7 mos.	13 yrs. 8 mos.	13 yrs. 8 mos.

The figures in the summaries above confirm in a striking manner, the results obtained by means of the applied attainment tests:

(a) Composition, Formal English, Spelling and Arithmetic favour the Correspondence method as compared with small schools. As in the attainment test results there is very slight superiority in Arithmetic.

(b) Writing is the only subject wherein the country school pupils show superiority over the Correspondence children in both the attainment tests (final age group) and the Proficiency Examination.

The figures for the pupils of the city school (offered as a fair indication of the general standard of proficiency expected at the Examination), reveal the further superiority of the Correspondence pupils over their town cousins in Composition, English and Writing. They are slightly weaker in Arithmetic and definitely so in Spelling.

Separating the long-term pupils of the Correspondence School from those who have been admitted more recently and whose scholastic ability cannot therefore be credited so freely to Correspondence teaching, we find that the former show higher attainment. A similar result in favour of the Grade O pupils is to be observed when their results are separated from those of the pupils in the larger Grade I schools.

TABLE I (ii): Summary of the Average Results in the Proficiency Examination of Grade 0 school pupils and long-term Correspondence pupils.

Subjects	Corres. Pupils (4 yrs. or more) (22 pupils)	Grade 0 only (10 pupils)
Language & Composition	68.4	65.
Formal English	42.9	40.4
Spelling	17.4	14.
Writing	17.2	17.3
Arithmetic	74.8	74.6

Although the results of the Grade 0 pupils have advanced appreciably as a result of the separation from those of the Grade I pupils, the Correspondence pupils still retain their lead in all subjects except Writing.

CHAPTER FOUR.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS, AND POSSIBLE LINES OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORRESPONDENCE SYSTEM.

Throughout the foregoing chapters it has been possible to traverse merely the more salient features which make the method of instruction by correspondence so distinctive from the methods of the classroom. Opinions, methods and results only of a general nature have been discussed though the individual has been quoted freely in exemplification of points which have been raised. It is recognized that methods of the classroom are subject to considerable variation according to the experience, ability and originality of the individual teachers, and it must be conceded also that for the resourceful Correspondence teacher there is an infinite variety of methods which might be adopted.

The present organization of the Correspondence system however, while making no provision for instruction in the full range of subjects taught in the classroom nevertheless allows for greater freedom in the pupil-teacher relationship. This is the feature which makes probably most appeal to the teachers themselves and to those who have studied or are acquainted with the system in practice. The natural response and the free independence of thought are

factors which must go far towards compensating for the lack of specific instruction in certain subjects.

The study of the development and scope of the system, and of the results it has so far been able to accomplish has been comprehensive enough to indicate its most distinctive features and yet sufficiently exhaustive to make possible an acceptance of certain general conclusions. The evidence assembled must provoke critical reflection on the efficacy of much of our classroom procedure. Pertinent questions might be asked regarding such problems as the physical and mental domination of the teacher over his pupils in the classroom, the child's need for greater freedom and the cultivation of more independence and self reliance, and the closer co-operation of parent, teacher and pupil. From the analysis of the results of the attainment tests it is reasonable to infer that the children can assimilate the content of the Syllabus of Instruction in most subjects as readily by the Correspondence methods as by the methods practised in the remote country schools.

In the English subjects including Composition, Formal English, Reading (Comprehension) the Correspondence methods produce a distinctly higher standard of attainment while in other subjects except Writing the attainment is slightly in favour of the Correspondence method. Such is the evidence provided by a summary of the attainment test results; such also is the corroboration derived from an analysis of the Proficiency Examination results. But the teachers of the School although more or less emphatic concerning

the superiority of their pupils in Composition and Reading (not oral) are less decisive regarding their ability in other subjects, and especially in Arithmetic and oral expression.

More positive than examination and test results, though probably less exact in final valuation, are the considered opinions of those secondary school teachers under whom Correspondence primary pupils have continued their post-primary education. Of the 50 pupils who were successful in the Proficiency Examination in 1932, 27 are continuing with the Correspondence secondary course of instruction, while only 6 have graduated to ordinary public or private secondary schools. An enquiry regarding the progress and the attitude towards the class work and general activities of the school of these six pupils, was addressed to the principals of their respective schools. Of the 6 reports returned 3 were non-committal indicating neither special abilities nor inferior capacity, while the other 3 were more definite in character and contained interesting verification of some of the general conclusions derived from this investigation.

(a) "In all her work we find M. - keen and interested. Her work, in general, is good and she shows particular ability in English. Her attitude to class work is good and she displays a very keen interest indeed in all school activities, as well as mixing well with other pupils...." Principal's Report.

(b) "....She has wonderful powers of concentration and is making splendid progress with the secondary work. The social side of her character is, naturally, not so well developed as if she had attended an ordinary school. She has no conversational powers and her enunciation is very poor.... Nevertheless, she enjoys the company of the other children and they like her.... She is taking great interest in games and is adapting herself very quickly to the change in her environment." Principal's Report.

(c) ".... he is doing quite well with us in all branches of his studies. I am certain that he has had quite a good grounding. He was naturally a bit shy on his first coming to the school, but now takes an intelligent and active interest both in the classwork and in the other activities of the school." Principal's report.

Most authoritative of all reports on the work of the school however, are those of responsible officials whose duty it is to examine and report on the efficiency of the educational institutions of the country. The following extracts from reports on the annual visits to the Correspondence School of the inspectors of the Government Education Department emphasize still further the reliability of the conclusions drawn from the results of the attainment tests.

(a) "Commendable features of the work that came under my notice were (1) the free expression of ideas in Composition (2) the steady improvement made

by the pupils in the work in all subjects during the year.

"Difficult cases are tactfully handled and the number of pupils who fail to respond is very small." - 1927.

(b) "The work sent in gives evidence of a spirit of endeavour, while much of it, especially in Composition (essays, letter writing) and Drawing reaches a high standard.... I saw many letters from parents expressing their appreciation of the services rendered by the school." - 1929

(c) "There are very few cases where effort and progress are not distinctly in evidence. These come mainly from homes where conditions are bad, e.g. camps....

"Language is on the whole better than in the schools; paragraphing, punctuation and spelling are good.....These results appear to indicate that this form of individual education is particularly successful in developing originality and free expression." - 1931.

Scholastic attainment alone however, does not provide sufficient reason for the extension nor even for the retention of the Correspondence system of education. If the pupils of the Correspondence School were by their isolation to suffer loss of cultural and practical education and be denied opportunities for developing social attitudes then indeed would it be necessary to restrict the functioning of the institution. But, as

has been indicated in Chapter 2 opportunities are provided by the school to enable its pupils to enter into interests of much wider range than would be possible within the ambit of their small communities; and the formation of associations and the establishment of institutions of a social and cultural character aim at strengthening the recognition of common interests and of the social bond. As long as the pupil remains in comparative isolation he finds need for little else than what the school has developed for him along these lines, but once he emerges and comes into personal relationship with others of his kind, certain deficiencies, once unrecognized, become accentuated. It is noticed, for example, that many pupils find it difficult to converse with others who are strange to them and that they are not sufficiently articulate in speech.

The introduction of speech training exercises into the syllabus of instruction possibly will assist in eliminating this weakness and the development of wireless educational sessions should prove a further valuable factor in the improvement of oral expression.

The apprehensions regarding the detrimental effects on the pupils of the loss of personal contact with the teacher are greatly allayed when one finds such harmony and sincere affection as are evident in the teacher-pupil relationships under the Correspondence system. Moreover the lack of whatever restricted social companionships and interests the small country school is able to provide is more than counterbalanced by the wider interests brought

within the pupil's range when he becomes a member of the greater social group of the Correspondence School.

Possibly the comparative nature of this investigation has, in places, tended to present the problem of rural education as the acceptance of only one of two alternative methods. To this, precisely, the present economic exigency has reduced it. Each method however, has its valuable features, as had the various methods supplanted by the Correspondence School; and each has its weaknesses. A combination of methods incorporating the best features of the several methods adopted at different times(1) would seem to offer the most comprehensive and efficacious scheme for the educational organization of the more isolated rural communities. The linking up of the remote rural schools with the extra activities and even with the scholastic instruction provided by the Correspondence School; the appointment of itinerant teachers working in collaboration with the teachers of the Correspondence School by advising and helping the parents and pupils, and by investigating and reporting on the circumstances of "difficult" pupils; the organizing of periodic "camp" schools in convenient centres for more intensive courses in the cultural and practical subjects; the more extensive use of wireless broadcasting to supplement the school lessons; the raising of the teaching efficiency of the Correspondence School; the provision of special teaching for retardates; - by such means the rural children would be assured of an education broad in aim, rich in content and sound in accomplishment.

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1. - See Chapter I.

The Correspondence School, being the most generally satisfactory provision yet made for the raising of the standard of rural education, might well be the central feature of a broader system serving well the educational requirements of all those very remote localities where the establishment of separate district schools would be uneconomical both financially and educationally. At twice the present cost of administration, much could be accomplished along the lines of development outlined above and the school would still remain an economical investment for the State. But the advent of a more prosperous period and the release of the school from its capacity as an instrument of economy will enable it to function still more liberally, to introduce improved methods and to remedy evident defects.

A P P E N D I X A.

Tests in the subjects Composition, Writing, Drawing, History and Geography which were used in this investigation. (The "Northumberland" Tests were used in Arithmetic, English, Spelling and Reading).

A I. COMPOSITION.

Time: 30 minutes.

Requirements: Blotting paper
Pen and ink (children 10 or over)
Pencil (children under 10).

Write a composition on one of these subjects:-

(a) My Pets or My Toys.
(b) Home or My Home.
or (c) Games I like or
My Favourite Sport.

A II. WRITING.

One Test.

Time: 2 minutes (exactly)

Requirements: Children under 10 : pencils.
Children over that age: pen and ink.

Write out this sentence in good writing and as often as possible:
Mary had a little lamb.

A III. DRAWING.

Time: 30 minutes.

Crayons or pencils may be used. Also rubbers. No rulers, set squares, or other instruments are to be used.

Test 1: (ten minutes).

Draw a picture of:-

"Little Boy Blue come blow up your horn,
The Sheep's in the meadow, the cow's in the corn,
Where's the boy who looks after the sheep?
He's under the haycock fast asleep."

Test 2: (ten Minutes).

Draw quickly as many as you can of the following:-

(a) an apple
(b) a cup
(c) a flower
(d) a boot
(e) a ship

Test 3: (ten minutes).

Sketch a house you would like to live in.
Show hills and surrounding trees, fences, etc.

A IV. HISTORY.

Draw a line under the right words, wherever two or more words are printed in big letters between brackets.

Like this: George V was the (FATHER, SON, NEPHEW) of Edward VII.

1. William the Conqueror came to England in (1066, 1266, 1688).

2. Alfred the Great fought against the (DANES, FRENCH, ROMANS).

3. (RICHARD I, CARDINAL WOLSEY, KING JOHN) was a great crusader.

4. Julius Caesar was a great (NORMAN, ROMAN, ANGLO-SAXON) general who invaded Britain in (55, 100, 1066) B.C.

5. America was discovered by (DRAKE, CABOT, COLUMBUS) in (1300, 1392, 1492, 1783).

6. (CHANDOS, CLIVE, CAXTON) was the first English printer.

7. Shakespeare was a great (SOLDIER, STATESMAN, POET) who lived in the reign of (HENRY VII, QUEEN ELIZABETH, QUEEN VICTORIA).

8. The Battle of Trafalgar was won by (NAPOLEON, NELSON, WELLINGTON).

9. (HENRY VIII, CHARLES I, JAMES II) and (MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, MARY WIFE OF WILLIAM III, QUEEN ELIZABETH) were both beheaded.

10. (COOK, HOBSON, KUPE, TASMAN) was the first white man to land in New Zealand.

11. The (GERMANS, MAORIS, INDIANS) lived in New Zealand before the white man came.

12. (TASMAN, DRAKE, WAKEFIELD) was the first white man to discover New Zealand.

13. The Treaty of Waitangi was signed by (HOBSON, MASSEY, GREY) in the year (1066, 1688, 1840).

14. (SELWYN, MARSDEN, ST.AUGUSTINE) was the first missionary to land in New Zealand and he preached his first sermon at (AUCKLAND, BAY OF ISLANDS, DUNEDIN).

15. (TE RAUPARAHA, HONE HEKE, TE KOOTI) cut down the flagstaff at Russell but the rebellion was put down by (HOBSON, FITZROY, GREY).

16. (WAKEFIELD, WARD, SEDDON) formed the New Zealand Association in England and the first immigrants landed at (GISBORNE, WELLINGTON, NEW PLYMOUTH).

17. The massacre at (WAITANGI, TAURANGA, WAIRAU) was the result of trying to arrest (TE KOOTI, KUPE, TE RAUPARAHA).

18. Gladstone lived (BEFORE, AFTER, ABOUT THE SAME TIME AS) Pitt.

19. We owe much of our law to the ancient (ROMANS, GREEKS, CHINESE) and much of our love of beauty to the ancient (GREEKS, EGYPTIANS, ITALIANS).

20. The Battle of Waterloo was fought against the (DUTCH, FRENCH, GERMANS) and was won by (NAPOLEON, NELSON, WELLINGTON) in (1800, 1815, 1851, 1915).

21. In (1300, 1392, 1492, 1783) the (AUSTRALIAN, AMERICAN, CANADIAN) colonies became independent of (BRITISH, FRENCH, AMERICAN) rule.

22. No. 1. Cromer No. _____ was the first Prime Minister of South Africa.

No. 2. Kruger No. _____ was in charge of the British forces during the Boer War.

No. 3. Botha No. _____ planned the irrigation of Lower Egypt.

No. 4. Roberts No. _____ bought the Suez Canal shares for England.

No. 5. Disraeli No. _____ led the Boers in the Boer War.

23. (BACON, STEPHENSON, GALILEO) invented the (SPINNING JENNY, ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH, STEAM-ENGINE.)

24. Match the following:

No. 1. AMUNDSEN No. _____ was the first man to fly to Australia.

No. 2. ROSS SMITH No. _____ was the inventor of the electric telegraph.

No. 3. MARCONI No. _____ was the inventor of wireless telegraphy.

No. 4. BELL No. _____ was the first man to reach the South Pole.

No. 5. LIVINGSTONE No. _____ was a great missionary explorer in Africa.

25. The Stuarts were not (STRONG, WEAK, SCOTTISH) rulers like the Tudors. In the reign of Charles I the (CIVIL, FRENCH, AMERICAN) War broke out; and at length (CARDINAL WOLSEY, THOMAS CROMWELL, OLIVER CROMWELL) was made Protector.

26. The East India Company was formed in (1500, 1600, 1700, 1800). The British first went to India as (soldiers, traders, missionaries); and, as such, their chief rivals were the (FRENCH, INDIANS, MOHAMMEDANS). The foundations of British rule in India were laid by (SURAJAH DOWLAH, LORD KITCHENER, LORD CLIVE), who avenged the horrors of the Black Hole of (BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, COAL-MINING) by his victory at (CEYLON, PLASSEY, SINGAPORE) in (1657, 1757, 1857).

27. About the beginning of the (SEVENTEENTH, NINETEENTH, TWENTIETH) century, a great change took place in the main occupations of the people of (TO-DAY, ENGLAND, HIGH BIRTH). Before they had been chiefly engaged in (WARFARE, MANUFACTURE, AGRICULTURE); now they are chiefly engaged in (WARFARE, MANUFACTURE, AGRICULTURE). As a result, they flocked from the (COAST, TOWNS, COUNTRY) to the (COAST, TOWNS, COUNTRY); and the

nation as a whole became (SMALLER, POORER, RICHER). Two important causes were the use of (WOOD, STEAM, WIND-MILLS) and the invention of (COAL, MACHINERY, WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY). And the change is sometimes spoken of as the (FRENCH, PROTESTANT, INDUSTRIAL) Revolution.

28. Now write a short account of "Famous Air Flights".

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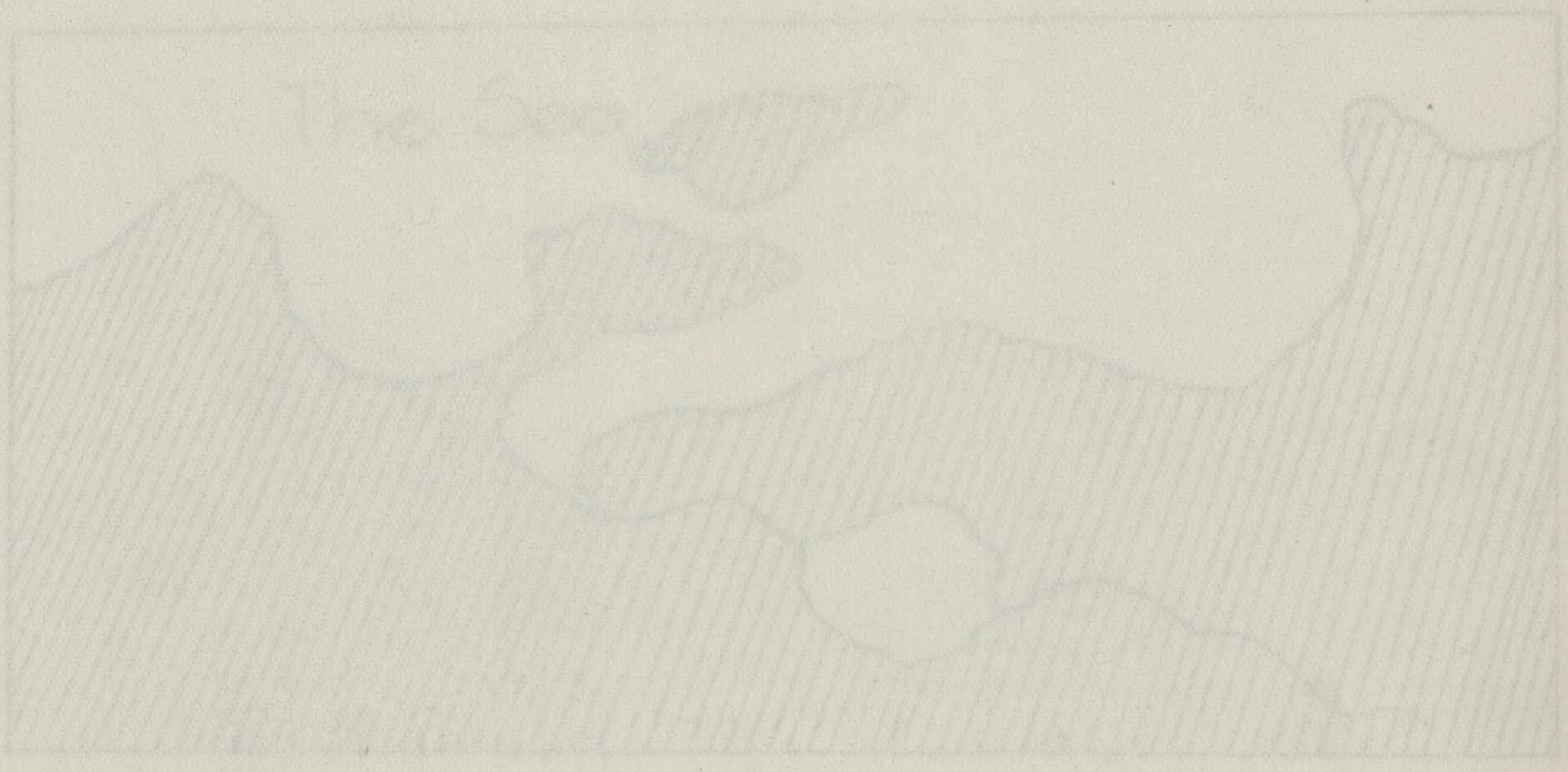


A V. GEOGRAPHY.

Draw a line under the right words, wherever three or more words are printed between brackets.

Like this:

Wellington is the Capital of (America, New Zealand, Australia.)

---

1. These are New Zealand towns. Underline those that are in the South Island: (Auckland, Greymouth, Wanganui, Napier, Nelson, Oamaru, Hawera, Hokitika, Timaru).

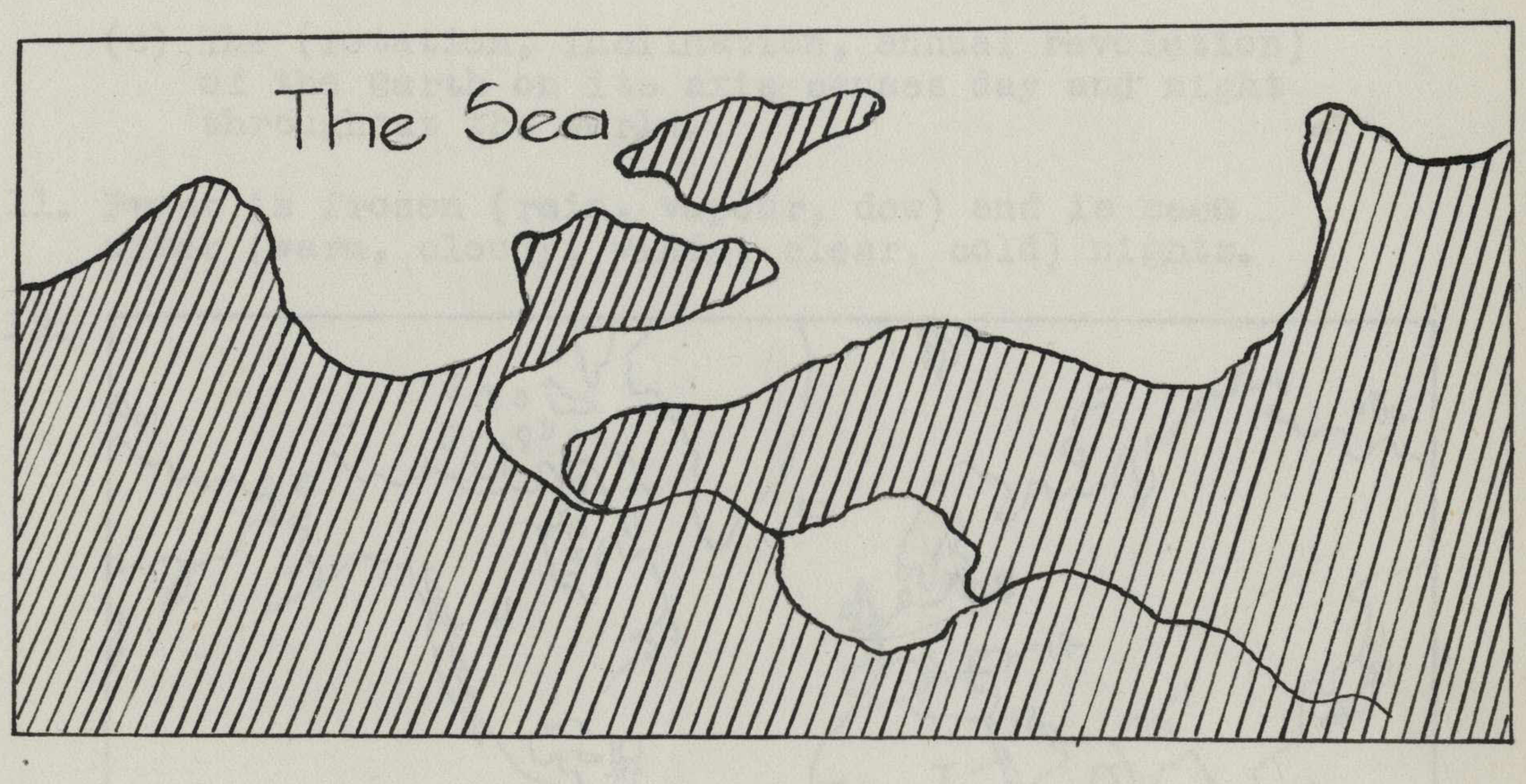
2. (a) At noon the shadows point (North, East, South, North-West.)

   (b) The sun crosses the sky from (West to East / East to West / East to North / West to South)

   (c) The shadow of a post is shortest (In the morning / In the evening / In the early morning / At noon)

3. Match the following:

No. 1.	Greenland	Zulus live in No. _____
No. 2.	America	Maoris live in No. _____
No. 3.	Africa	Red Indians live in No. ____
No. 4.	India	Eskimos live in No. _____
No. 5.	New Zealand	Hindus live in No. _____



4. In the map put the figure 1 where you see a bay
" " " " " " 2 " " " " river
" " " " " " 3 " " " " peninsula
" " " " " " 4 " " " an island
" " " " " " 5 " " " a strait
" " " " " " 6 " " " an isthmus

5. (a) From the town of Nelson are exported large quantities of (coal, apples, timber).

(b) From Greymouth are exported large quantities of (wool, fruit, coal).

(c) From Napier are exported large quantities of (gum, wool, timber.).

6. (a) The highest mountain in New Zealand is (Mt. Everest, Mt. Egmont, Mt. Cook, Mt. Ruapehu).

(b) The largest lake in New Zealand is (Lake Rotorua, Lake Taupo, Lake Superior).

7. Underline those rivers among the following that flow into the Tasman Sea:- Rhine, Clutha, Wanganui, Waitaki, Waikato, Northern Wairoa, Buller.

8. The nearest Continent to New Zealand is (America, Africa, Australia, Asia), the largest town of which is Cape Town, New York, Sydney).

9. The rain-bearing winds in New Zealand come from the (West, South, East, South East), so the rainfall is heaviest in (Hawke's Bay, Southland, Westland). Therefore wheat grows best in (Taranaki, Westland, Canterbury).

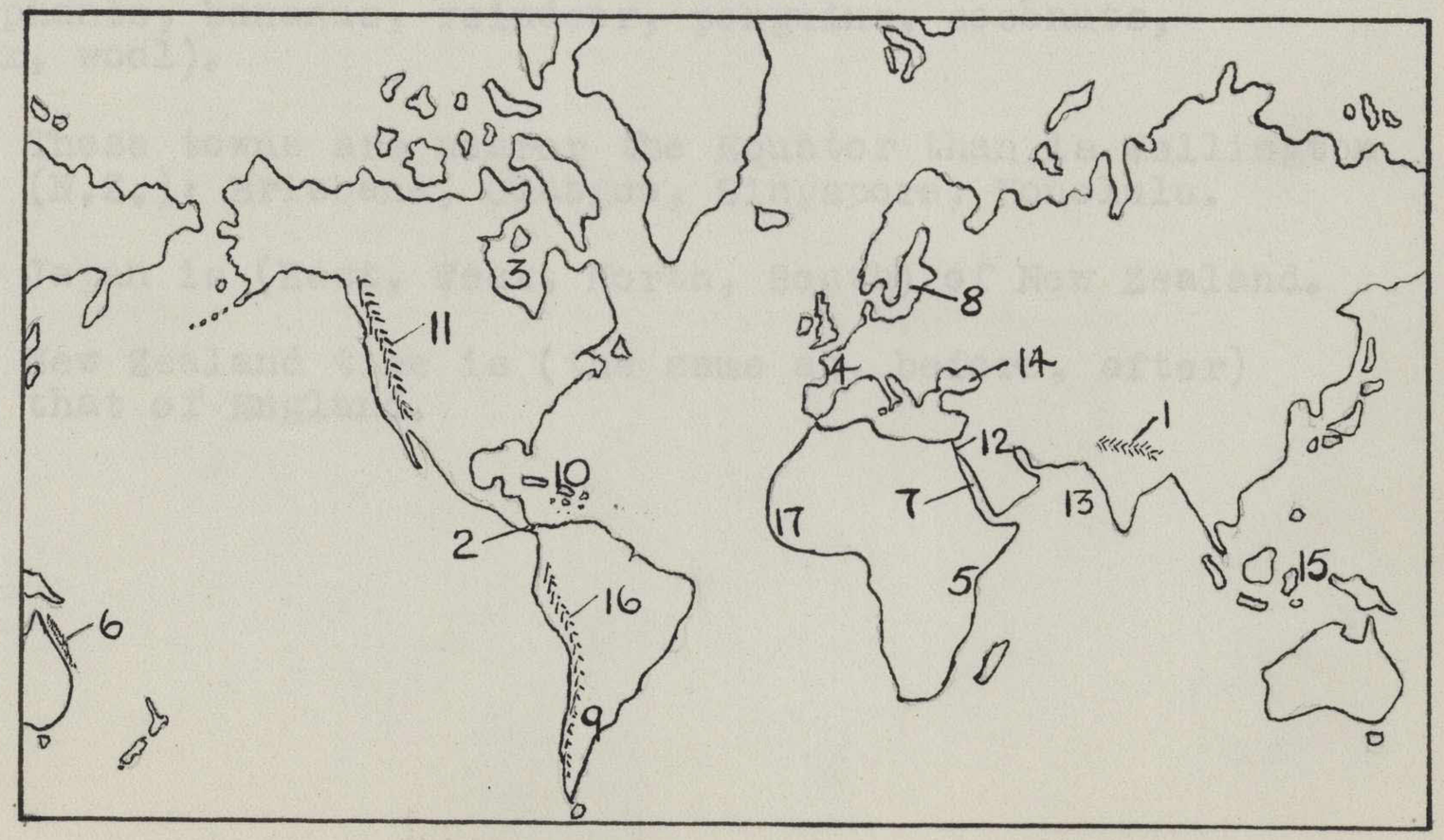
10. (a) When it is summer in New Zealand it is (Summer, Spring, Autumn, Winter) in England.

(b) The Earth makes a complete rotation on its axis in (twelve, forty-eight, twenty-four) hours.

(c) The (rotation, inclination, annual revolution) of the Earth on its axis causes day and night throughout the world.

11. Frost is frozen (rain, vapour, dew) and is seen after (warm, cloudy, windy, clear, cold) nights.

12.



In the map above:

Baltic Sea is No. _____
France is No. _____
Argentine is No. _____
West Indies is No. _____
Himalaya Range is No. _____
Red Sea is No. _____
Panama Canal is No. _____
Hudson Bay is No. _____
Great Barrier Reef is No. _____
Kenya Colony is No. _____

13. (a) Trade Winds in the Northern Hemisphere blow from (South-east, East, West, North-east, North-west).

(b) Monsoons affect the climate of (England, New Zealand, India).

14. (a) Rubber grows in (cold, temperate, hot) climates and is produced in large quantities in (Australia, Japan, Brazil).

(b) Petrol is imported into New Zealand from (Ceylon, United States of America, China).

15. From the whale is produced (copra, oil, nitrates). The whaling industry is carried on in the (Antarctic, Indian Ocean, North Sea).

16. Two minerals that have helped mostly to increase the prosperity of South Africa are (coal, asbestos, copper, gold, oil, diamonds).

17. The ocean current that flows from the American Coast across the Atlantic towards Europe is a (cold, warm, swift) current and is called the (Arctic Current, Gulf Stream, North Equatorial Current).

18. Cotton grows in (temperate, hot, cold) countries such as (England, Egypt, New Zealand). Cotton goods are manufactured in places with a (hot, dry, windy, moist) climate such as (London, Leeds, Manchester, Hull).

19. A (delta, bar, isthmus) has formed at the mouth of the (St. Lawrence, Thames, Ganges) River in (Australia, Europe, India).

20. The following are produced in tropical climates (Seals, elephants, bananas, reindeer, penguins, coconuts, teak, wool).

21. (a) These towns are nearer the Equator than is Wellington (N.Z.): Brisbane, Glasgow, Singapore, Honolulu.

(b) Japan is (East, West, North, South) of New Zealand.

(c) New Zealand time is (the same as, before, after) that of England.

22. Match these:

No. 1.	Australia	Cocoa comes from No. _____
No. 2.	Fiji	Wool is produced in No. _____
No. 3.	Central Africa	Coffee is grown in No. _____
No. 4.	Canada	Tea comes from No. _____
No. 5.	Ceylon	Printing paper comes from No. ___
No. 6.	Brazil	Sugar comes from No. _____

23. (a) The prairies are a (plain, forest, desert) in (Australia, California, Canada).

(b) The Deccan is a (river, plateau, lake) in (India, Africa, England).

(c) The Great Karoo is an (extensive lake, immense volcano, elevated plain) in Mexico, South Africa, China).

24. The Sahara is a great (island, lake, desert) of (grass, sand, water) in (Africa, South America, the Pacific Ocean). In such places the (Americans, Arabs, islanders) have to wander about with their (fishermen, boats, flocks); and find the (elephant, camel, reindeer) very useful to them.

25. At (London, Birmingham, Newcastle), which is in the (North, South, West) of England, on the river (Thames, Tyne, Mersey), many ships are built. Iron and (coal, cotton, timber) are found in the neighbourhood; and (coal, cotton, timber) can be brought from (America, Northumberland, Scandinavia), which is across the (North, South, Black)Sea.

A P P E N D I X B.

Extracts from parents' and children's letters, specifying points raised in the course of the investigation.

(i) "I like the Correspondence School. I didn't like riding off to school in the morning - there were not many children to play with so I do not miss them much." - Pupil's letter 6-8-33.

(ii) "Besides the 5 children there are 3 or 4 men, and all the backblock work of bread and butter making and endless other jobs, and only myself to do it. Also a very mischievous baby to look after; and the daily wash and iron, etc. So perhaps you may forgive if I fall short of your expectations, though I am trying with all my might." - Parent's letter, School file.

"It is very hard to keep the children to regular hours - we have such a busy life and I have so little time to help them." - Parent's letter.

(iii) "Anyway I cannot get the correct answer. Mother and I work after tea when we are sitting beside the fire. Mother just passed into Std.V at school and she cannot show me where I am wrong. Sometimes I have to show her how to do a sum or tell her the tables for it. Dad only passed the third so he cannot help me." - Pupil's letter, School file.

(iv) "I cannot go into details but you will understand when I say that during the last 3 years the children have had to work with me doing shepherding, milking and helping in every way possible to enable us to keep our home." - Parent's letter, School file, 3-10-33.

(v) "We live about 9 miles from the township just at the foot of the hills.
The road leading from our place to within about two miles of Methven is only a grass track and is very slippery after rain or snow. Our motor truck goes in to Methven about once a fortnight when we send in our lessons. Sometimes our truck cannot get out to go to the township when it is very snowy or wet, so we won't be able to get our lessons in regularly sometimes." - Pupil's letter, 13-8-33.

(vi) " - - - undoubtedly there is much work involved teaching children in their own homes as there is so much to attract their attention." - Parent's letter, School file.

(vii)" - - - over hilly roads and in winter has been impossible owing to snow and ice. Further the conveying of my children takes up about 3 hours of my time during the most important periods of morning and afternoon. It also means that the children must be away from 7.45 a.m. until 4.45 p.m. and nearing the end of each term they show obvious signs of strain. We have had to curtail their attendance owing to this." - Parent's letter, School file, 13-4-32.

(viii) "Previously when the children were attending the local school I had to accompany them both to and fro on account of a dangerous bridge and railway crossing and they missed so much time in rough weather that their schooling was of little use." - Parent's letter.

A P P E N D I X C.(i)

QUESTIONNAIRE SUBMITTED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE TEACHING STAFF OF THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

1. Length of Service (a) in C.S.? (b) in ordinary class teaching?
2. Do you find that Correspondence work demands more or less teaching ability than does ordinary class teaching? In what way?
3. Do you consider Correspondence work makes greater demands on the teacher? If so, how?
4. Do you find Correspondence teaching more or less fatiguing than ordinary class teaching?
5. Do you consider the present hours are excessive? If so, state what you consider would be a reasonable maximum length for a teaching day? (Salary considerations apart.) Can you offer any evidence in support of your opinion?
6. In what subjects do you think better results are obtainable by Correspondence than by classroom methods.
7. In what subjects have you found it difficult to secure as good results by Correspondence as by classroom teaching?
8. What special difficulties have you encountered in actual teaching practice in Correspondence work?
9. What do you consider to be the maximum number of pupils of the standard you are teaching at present, that you can deal with effectively? What class are you teaching?

A P P E N D I X C.(ii)

Extracts from replies offered by present and former members of the Correspondence teaching staff to Questionnaire.

In answer to questions 2 and 3.

(a) "It is quite different - I cannot compare the two, but I feel that my experience in the Correspondence School has made me a 100% better teacher." (3 years class teaching - 9 years Correspondence.)

(b) "Added to the skill required in all teaching, there is an intuitive sense absolutely essential to success in Correspondence work, not called upon to nearly such a marked degree in classroom teaching." (7 years classroom - 8 years Correspondence School.)

(c) " - - - lack of mental stimulus provided by classmates and the classroom atmosphere. This situation presents a continual challenge to the teacher, in that he must in other ways foster the pupil's desire to achieve the best possible results." (6 years classroom - 3 years Correspondence School.)

(d) "Force has no value in Correspondence work - it is imperative to lead - not drive, in fact coercion brings failure here."

(e) "Classroom teaching has a wider scope - ability in physical training; sport, etc. is of great value in the classroom." (8 years classroom - 8 months Correspondence School.)

(f) "I should say that lack of teaching ability would be less easily detected than in an ordinary school." (13 years classroom - 10 years Correspondence .)

(g) "I find my standard has changed since I came here, likewise my teaching ability, because much more is demanded by the very nature of the work." (7 years classroom - 5 months Correspondence.)

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