

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.—With the Government vote for the purpose the Board was enabled to establish and continue cookery classes for teachers, and at certain centres cookery schools have been instituted for the senior girls of the public schools, pupil-teachers, and such teachers as desire further instruction. Other similar classes are being set up. In the same localities carpentry classes are also formed for boys. Thus, a solid basis of a certain amount of technical work is founded for our schools. There still remains the establishment of permanent tutoring in handwork in connection with the Training College. This the Board hopes to see accomplished during the present year. To prepare for handwork being generally taught in the schools the Board has passed a resolution to provide as soon as possible specially designed desks for infant-rooms.

Reference must here be made to the fact that the Board agreed, so far as responsibility is concerned, to take over the assets of the Dunedin Technical Classes' Association and to assist in carrying on the classes as continuation and technical classes for the youth of the city. Under special regulations, since issued by the Minister of Education, a combined directorate now has them in charge.

TRAINING COLLEGE.—The report of the Principal of the Training College is given below.

The Board must again put forward the claims of the Dunedin Training College for further and better consideration at the hands of the Government. Its present efficiency could easily be brought more into accordance with the times by the appointment of the tutors or instructors desiderated in the report of the Principal hereto appended. This Training College has been most helpful in providing well-trained teachers, not only for Otago but for every Board in the colony. It is the hope of the Otago Education Board that it may continue to supply good teachers; but that can only be done by supplying additional and up-to-date tutors, and that the Board cannot do unless the allowance given for the Training College is materially increased. The time has assuredly come when the Minister of Education should take counsel with the educational authorities concerned, in order to purvey a more thoroughly efficient training for teachers of whom so much more is now demanded. It is the opinion of this Board that properly equipped tutors in the training colleges should take the place of the makeshift peripatetic teaching that at present obtains with regard to new subjects.

The cost of the institution for the year was: Salaries, £495 6s. 8d.; allowance to students, £349 11s. 8d.; incidentals, £41 5s.; total, £886 3s. 4d.: less Government grant for training of teachers, £849 11s. 8d.: net cost, £36 11s. 8d.

SCHOOL OF ART AND DESIGN.—The total number of students enrolled was 387. This number includes 49 teachers and pupil-teachers, 20 students from the Training College, 79 students who attended the day classes, 177 students who attended the evening classes, and 62 teachers and pupil-teachers who attended the Saturday classes.

The cost of the school was: Salaries, £655 13s. 4d.; incidental expenses, £74 14 1d.: total, £730 7s. 5d.: less fees (five quarters), £332 8s.; and Government grant under the Manual and Technical Instruction Act, £281 16s.: net cost, £116 3s. 5d.

GYMNASTICS AND DRILL.—The Board's teacher of gymnastics, Mr. Hanna, visited the Home-country during the year, and while there looked into the work of the best gymnasia in England, Ireland, and Scotland. His experience enabled him to pronounce in favour of the methods used at Aberdeen, and to advise their adoption. He attends all the larger schools where facilities exist and gives instruction in physical training. He especially imparts such to the pupil-teachers and the students of the Training College, who in the future will be able to do the same to the scholars of our public schools. Many of our teachers, both male and female, have already acquired proficiency in athletics and calisthenics, and are regularly training their pupils therein. While school and class drill is universal, military drill prevails in all the larger schools. Under the new arrangements for the training of all teachers in drill, no school should be unable to show some result of this training. The consolidation of school cadet companies into battalions with local officers, and all under command and inspection of Major Loveday, is expected by the Board to give an impetus to drill and physical training.

INSPECTION.—The average age at which pupils are passing from the schools seems to be decreasing. The average age of those presented in the Sixth Standard in 1902 was 13 years and 4 months, in 1901 the average of those who passed the Sixth Standard was 13 years and 10 months, and 13 years and 6½ months is the mean of the average ages for the three previous years, during which the Otago averages were the lowest in the colony. The Board deprecates the shortening of the school life of the pupils which these averages seem to indicate.

The Inspectors report the "general efficiency" of the Standard VII. classes to be weak in 7 schools, fair in 15, satisfactory in 22, good in 14, and very good in 4. It is evident that many parents are desirous of advanced education for their children, not only in towns and closely settled portions of the district, but also in thinly settled portions, and it is to the credit of the teachers of the small schools that they are as ready to give the children all the advantages within their power. It would be well if the Department could still further extend the scope of its grant of free secondary and advanced primary education. The attendance at the old-established district high schools is maintained, and at the recently established schools the attendance fully justifies their establishment.

FINANCE.—The sum expended during the year in teachers' salaries, including house and lodging allowances, was £63,073 9s. 3d.; the amount paid to School Committees for incidental expenses was £5,017 15s.; the amount expended in the erection, enlargement, and improvement of school buildings and the purchase of sites was £10,086 2s. From its income for general purposes the Board has during the year been enabled to make graduated increases, amounting to nearly £1,000 in all, on the allowances previously given to School Committees. The scheme of these increases was prepared with great care, and has hitherto given great satisfaction, for many Committees, of small schools especially, were thereby enabled to make ends meet. A large number of