

use is being made of the facilities provided. In some cases, indeed, the available accommodation is being taxed to the utmost. As regards the smaller centres, the number of persons attending technical classes is not in all cases as large as it might be. The primary purpose, however, of the so-called technical schools in such centres is to provide suitable forms of manual instruction for boys and girls attending rural schools. In other words, the smaller technical schools are really to be regarded as manual-training schools, and as such they are performing a not unimportant part in the scheme of education. Most of them are attached to or are adjacent to district high schools or secondary schools, and are used mainly for classes for science, woodwork, and cookery from such schools and from other schools in their vicinity. Where there is a demand for evening technical or continuation classes these buildings are available for such classes. In not a few cases, and in some of the smallest districts, the attendance at evening classes is exceedingly good.

The number of approved classes, and the attendance thereat, continues to increase. A pleasing feature is the steady diminution in the number of students who attend for instruction in one subject only. Courses of instruction suited to various trades and occupations are now provided in all of the technical schools proper, and it is very encouraging to note the number of young persons who, under the voluntary system that at present obtains, are willing after their ordinary day's work to attend evening classes on two and three nights a week.

The day technical classes in which regular instruction for not less than twenty hours a week is given to young persons who have qualified for free places have been well attended, and, as has been stated in previous reports, appear to fill a distinct gap in the scheme of secondary education. It is a significant fact that the establishment of these classes has not been accompanied by any diminution in the number of pupils entering the secondary schools. The opinion is advanced that had these classes not been established the majority of the pupils who have taken advantage of them would not, on leaving the primary schools, have proceeded to secondary schools, but would have drifted into some form of employment. Day technical classes were held during the year at the four large centres, and at Wanganui, Napier, and Westport, and were attended by 846 free pupils. The classes provide excellent courses relating to commercial, industrial, and domestic pursuits. In two cases special courses in art have also been provided. Each course extends, generally speaking, over two years, and is so arranged as to form a suitable introduction to more specialized studies later on. It may be here mentioned that the services of the young people in attendance at these day classes are eagerly sought after by merchants and other employers of labour. A fair percentage of those who complete the junior course qualify for senior free places entitling them to three more years' free tuition. Such senior free places are usually held at evening classes, the holders taking up some form of employment on the completion of their junior course. It is needless to say that the presence of these students in the evening classes has done much to raise the standard of work therein.

It is, however, apparent that, in spite of the facilities provided for free secondary education at secondary schools, district high schools, and technical schools, the number of boys and girls who leave the primary schools and do not proceed to one or other of the above-mentioned schools remains far too large. It is probable that without disturbing existing arrangements the number could be materially diminished. Thus there appears to be a need for a much closer connection than at present obtains between the primary schools on the one hand and the schools of secondary grade on the other. Again, parents in many cases stand in need of guidance and instruction as to the best course to pursue in the case of boys or girls who are about to leave the primary schools. Too much appears to be too often left to chance at what is undoubtedly the most critical period in the lives of young people. Last, but not least, every opportunity should be taken to press upon the public attention the importance, both from the civic and the economic standpoint, of the need for better provision for the further education of adolescents. The case of Halifax may be cited as an example of what it is possible to accomplish in the way of encouraging the attendance of adolescents at classes under the voluntary system. The chief attendance officer forwards weekly a list of pupils who have left the primary schools during the week to the Principal of the Technical College. As each list is received, an officer of the College visits the home of each pupil, and points out the advantages of attending the classes, and the serious loss that may result if any length of time is allowed to elapse before the boy takes up evening-school work. If the parent gives an unfavourable reply, the officer makes a point of seeing the boy himself. The population of Halifax is 107,000, yet the services of one officer are as a rule sufficient for the work of visitation. During four weeks in 1907, 66 per cent. of the boys leaving the primary schools in Halifax immediately joined the evening classes. Only 12·3 per cent. refused. Of the remainder, 9·6 per cent. were working late, and so were unable to attend, 8·5 per cent. lived too far away from the technical school, and 3·6 per cent. were ill or otherwise unfitted for evening-school work.

Though much good work has been and is being done in New Zealand under the voluntary system, it is becoming increasingly apparent that it will be necessary in the near future to take some further steps to prevent, by reducing as far as possible the proportion of children who leave the primary schools at an early age and attend no further classes of any sort, the present waste of the results of the primary-school training, and the evils that accompany this waste. The matter is receiving considerable attention at Home. Thus, under the Education (Scotland) Act, 1908, it is now the duty of School Boards to make provision for the further instruction of persons between the ages of 14 and 17 who are not otherwise receiving a suitable education. The Boards are further empowered to make by-laws requiring the attendance of such persons, with certain exemptions, at continuation classes, and determining the times at which and the periods for which such classes shall be held. It is the opinion of the Consultative Committee of the English Board of Education that local education authorities in England and Wales should be given powers similar to the powers now held by the Scotch School Boards. It will be interesting