

I take pleasure in expressing appreciation of the manner in which all members of the staff have carried out their respective duties throughout the year, often under trying circumstances. A special feature has been the large amount of equipment and repair work carried out by the engineering staff with the assistance at times of the class students.

A. G. TOMKIES, Director.

CANTERBURY DISTRICT.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE SUPERVISOR OF MANUAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

War conditions generally have materially affected all technical and continuation classes throughout the district, especially in the country, where in some instances the attendances have been reduced to a minimum. Classes under the direct control of the Education Board were carried on at Geraldine, Greymouth, Hokitika, Blackball, Kaikoura, Doyleston, Leeston, and Lakeside. The new manual-training building at Geraldine has done duty as a technical school, and successful classes have been carried on at that centre. During the past year the Board has given every encouragement and every assistance to technical and continuation classes wherever there was a prospect of these classes being carried on. In this connection the new regulations issued for technical classes by which a liberal allowance may be paid as capitation for pupils taking up courses of instruction in agricultural, industrial, and domestic subjects should give a filip to all technical and continuation classes throughout the district, and in the future enable all young people to equip themselves thoroughly as far as education goes to compete successfully in the great industrial and commercial struggle which is bound to take place at the conclusion of the war.

Classes for pupil-teachers, probationers, and uncertificated teachers have been carried on at Timaru, Christchurch, and Greymouth. Instruction has been given in the different branches of drawing, agriculture, hygiene, and ambulance work to enable them to gain their practical certificates. All of these courses of instruction have been well attended; especially has the work done at Greymouth been appreciated by the teachers on the West Coast.

R. GRANT, Supervisor.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE CHRISTCHURCH TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

After twelve years of work it may be of interest to place on record a comparison between the positions at the beginning and end of this period. At the beginning of 1906 we had 204 part-time students, with 15 members on the staff, the Director only being engaged full time. In 1917 we enrolled a total of 1,730 students, 1,267 being part-time and 463 full-time, while our staff has increased to 53, 34 being full-time members and 19 part-time. For the 1916 session I was able to report a small total increase of only 24 students: last year we had an increase of 129, no less than 87 of these being credited to the Technical High School, which surpassed the highest previous record by 42. It is peculiarly gratifying to feel that, despite the deepening tragedy of the war, there is a growing recognition that the means of remedying the evils of the present time are to be sought by way of education, and that a democracy cannot endure unless it be rightly trained.

Technical High School.—The 463 pupils in the Technical High School were divided between the various courses as follows: Commercial, 216; domestic science, 70; industrial, 134; agricultural, 43.

It has been an encouragement to know that other Government Departments are prepared to recognize the value of the work that is being done in our technical schools. The latest evidence of this is the proposal of the Post and Telegraph Department to limit appointments for junior mechanics and mechanicians to boys who have passed through a course in technical high schools, and after their appointment to set them free during the day to continue their training. We may well hope that the Railway Department, which heretofore has resolutely refused to give any sort of recognition to the technical school, will be moved to emulate the example of the Post and Telegraph Department. In Victoria apprentices in the Government railway workshops are required to attend the Melbourne Technical College during the day, and are given special rewards for successful work. It is surely more than time that the New Zealand Railway Department abandoned the attitude which up to the present it has maintained.

For the first time a Public Service Entrance class has been arranged in connection with our Technical High School, with a commercial and an engineering section. The action of the Commissioner in consenting to give credit in the examination for proficiency in the principles and practice of metal-work or woodwork is a gratifying sign, and I trust that similar recognition will be given to the work of our home-science departments. While the Public Service Entrance Examination is generally regarded as a preliminary to Matriculation, and home-science bursaries may be awarded to those who have successfully passed it, it would certainly seem that housecraft has at least as much right to a place among the subjects of the examination as shorthand and book-keeping.

During the year a discussion class was arranged for the senior boys. The purpose of this class is not merely to give the members an opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the formalities that accompany the conduct of public business, nor yet to enable them to cultivate a readiness of speech; it has been rather to encourage them to think clearly and independently, and if we can get them to do this we are laying the foundation for citizenship of a stamp that will ensure progress and freedom. I hope that this year it will be possible to arrange a similar discussion class for the girls, and that its work will be rendered more solid by a study of the rise of our social institutions.