

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE CANTERBURY COLLEGE SCHOOL OF ART.

Notwithstanding a year of adverse circumstances attributable to war conditions followed by the influenza epidemic, the year's work of the school can be said to be a success judged from the point of view of progress made by the majority of students, the number of whom was 345.

There were no examinations, but the Board of Governors allowed the scholarships, and also the prizes to be awarded on the merits of the work done in class during the year. The Education Department also granted senior free places and extensions of free places to all students on the merits of their year's work, so that, as far as scholarships and free places were concerned, the school was not handicapped for 1919.

The life classes, which since the war have suffered greatly, showed some considerable improvement towards the end of the year, especially the evening classes, which are composed chiefly of students at work during the day. A number of these who had been day students in the school and who follow occupations requiring an art training are proving the value of their early training in their daily work. Some of the younger students have made rapid strides in their progress. Figure composition is a strong feature in connection with the life classes, and is a subject that calls for very serious study. Unfortunately, it was one of the classes which suffered through the early closing of the school. The work of some of the students in the classes for landscape-painting and painting from still life was quite equal to that of the previous years, and good progress was made by the majority. A new class was formed at the beginning of the second term for the study of pictorial perspective. This class will undoubtedly prove of great value to landscape students in the future. The classes in drawing from the antique showed an improvement, especially in the case of younger students. More time was devoted to model-drawing and drawing from common objects by the younger students, and this will have a beneficial effect on all classes of work in the future.

The modelling classes maintained the standard of previous years. There was less to show for the year owing to the early closing of the school.

The needlework classes attained a high standard. The work done in class during the year was examined by an outside expert, and her report says: "The needlework examined by me this morning included embroidery, dressmaking, millinery, and art needlework. To the examiner the most striking feature of the exhibition was that each article from the original design to the actual finished article was the product solely of the pupil's own talent. That pupils of first and second year should be capable of producing such work shows the excellent co-ordination of the different branches of study. The thorough training the girls receive in applied art on artistic and useful lines should appeal to parents wishing their daughters to have a true and practical idea of making their homes beautiful."

In the applied art classes some of the work of the advanced students surpassed anything done previously. We have been fortunate in retaining some of the older students who are undoubtedly a help to the juniors.

The classes for teachers were held on Saturday mornings. The subjects taught were freehand drawing, blackboard drawing, drawing with coloured crayons, geometry, carton work, paper-folding, and plasticine-modelling.

Although the Board of Governors have made provision for free tuition of returned soldiers, only five availed themselves of the opportunity during the year. One of these was taking architecture, one painting and decorating, one wood-carving, one lettering and design for marble-carving, and one cartooning.

The painters' apprentices' class was started just over a year ago, and is now beginning to justify its existence. The class is held during the day, and although at some inconvenience to employers most of them acknowledge that the net results are greatly in favour of this arrangement.

Past students of the Christchurch School of Art are engaged in all the leading centres of the Dominion as teachers, and in industries where art is applied. There is an increased demand for boys and girls with an art training, and this year we were able to give a firm the necessary help to start a branch of work that had not previously been done by New Zealand manufacturers.

For the first two years a boy or girl coming to us after leaving the public school is given a general course. The bulk of this time is applied to drawing. They are also taught elementary modelling from the cast and natural objects, design, and craft work. After two years they are, or should be, in a position to specialize in some particular branch. Unfortunately for the school, and, I think, in some cases for the students, a number go to work at the end of the two years. A good proportion, however, return to us for the evening classes.

The drawing, design, modelling, and crafts classes afford a training-ground for apprentices who are actually engaged in trades, and give them an opportunity of doing work of a more artistic nature than may come their way in workshop practice. For example, plasterers and stonemasons, and metal workers (be they blacksmiths, coppersmiths, or tinsmiths) are offered an opportunity of putting their technical skill to more artistic use, and are enabled to enlarge their capacity as workmen.

Thanks are due to those who have given special prizes—W. H. Montgomery, Esq., W. Reece, Esq., J. Gibbs, Esq., W. Sey, Esq., Mrs. Lonsdale, Messrs. Hammond and Co., Canterbury Branch of the Institute of Architects; also to J. M. Isitt, Esq., who has offered a prize of one guinea for illuminating, and to Messrs. Ballantyne and Co. for prize of three guineas for craft work.

The equipment of the school includes a very valuable library, which is constantly being added to. This year, among other books, we were able to secure, through the kindness of Dr. Chilton, copies of Hamilton's "Maori Art," and Owen Jones's "Grammar of Ornament." A beautifully bound volume of "Venus and Apollo," by Stillman, was also presented to the school by William Reece, Esq.

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