

CHRISTCHURCH.
SCHOOL OF DOMESTIC INSTRUCTION.

Report and Balance-sheet for 1896.

In presenting the second annual report your committee have much pleasure in drawing attention to the steady advance of the school and its growing popularity, as proving beyond doubt that a public need was supplied by its establishment.

During the present year the school has been attended by 394 pupils, as against 294 last year, and a large proportion of the increase has consisted of children who have passed the sixth standard in the primary schools.

Owing to the building in which the school was opened being required by the owners for another purpose, new premises had to be procured, and these have been found of a suitable character in this building.

The demand for instruction in laundry work not having been found equal to that for other branches of instruction given in the school—cookery and dressmaking—your committee decided to discontinue the taking in of washing, and only to give instruction in ironing and the getting up of fine articles, for which there is some demand.

Your committee regret that, with clear evidence of the need, and the prospect of increased usefulness of the school, the question of its continuance should have to be considered; yet, unhappily, such is the case. As imparting technical instruction, the school comes within the provisions of the Technical Education Act passed by the last Parliament, and, consequently, the liberal assistance which the school had received from the Education Department has given place to a miserably small capitation grant based on attendance, which is not likely to amount to one-third of the subsidy received last year. Under such circumstances, it will be impossible to keep the school open on the lines on which it has been hitherto carried on.

Your committee has been in correspondence with the Education Department during the whole of the year, in the hope of being able to secure better terms, but in vain. Hope has indeed been held out that a subsidy might be looked for in the event of the grant in aid of technical education not being exhausted; but that grant was so small (only £2,000) that the hope of obtaining any additional assistance is a very slight one. Your committee hope that efforts will be made throughout the colony to induce the new Parliament to give more generous assistance to the very important object of technical education, which is now receiving so large a share of the attention of European countries. The Technical Education Association of Auckland is already moving in this direction. Meanwhile the question presses whether the school should be closed at once, or should struggle on in the hope of receiving more substantial assistance. The balance-sheet presented will show that there is at present the same amount in hand as that with which we began the year (£40), and the school could be carried on for another term, or quarter, without getting into debt, but not for a longer period without a large increase in private subscriptions, or the raising of the pupil's fees considerably, which would probably defeat the main object with which the school was opened. The expenses can scarcely be reduced if the efficiency of the school is to be considered, and the valuable services of the superintendent and her assistants retained.

Provisional notice that their services will be dispensed with has already been given to the staff, and no permanent arrangements have been entered into regarding the premises which we occupy.

Your committee considers that some decision should be arrived at at once on this important question, and regrets that it cannot make any suggestion for carrying on the school under the present exigencies of the case.

In view of its own experience, and of the very favourable report of Mrs. R. D. Harman, late of the South Kensington School of Cookery, your committee feels bound to express its high appreciation of the work of Mrs. Gard'ner, to whose skill and energy the success of the school is in a large measure to be attributed.

CHARLOTTE W. TURRELL,
Vice-President.

NOTE.—The committee are glad to be able to state that a subsidy of £80 has been since received from the Education Department, which will, with liberal subscriptions, enable them to carry on the school for another year.

BALANCE-SHEET for the Year ending 7th December, 1896.

<i>Receipts.</i>				<i>Expenditure.</i>			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Balance from 1895—Cash in bank ..	85	5	4	Cooking materials—Cost ..	119	8	4
Petty cash ..	5	0	5	Sales ..	45	8	0
			40 5 9				74 0 4
Donations and subscriptions—				General expenses—Rates, coals, gas, carriage,			
From Government on earnings, 1895 ..	88	0	6	advertising ..	121	2	6
From Government on subscriptions, 1896 ..	45	0	6	Salaries ..	151	15	9
From Government on attendance, 1896 ..	10	8	6	Preliminary expenses ..	2	11	3
From subscribers (Christchurch), 1896 ..	48	16	6	Cash on hand in Union Bank ..	40	8	6
			192 1 0				
Sundry receipts—Tickets sold ..			9 2 0				
Rent of stable ..			112 13 10				
Fees ..			40 0 3				
Laundry ..			4 4 6				
Less Cartage ..			35 15 9				
			£389 18 4				£389 18 4
Balance brought down, cash in hand in Union Bank ..			£40 8 6	Christchurch, 7th December, 1896.			W. CHRYSTAL, Hon. Treasurer.