

INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Although the Jubilee Institute for the Blind is a private institution, and not in any way under Government control, it receives payment from the Education Department on account of pupils for whose tuition the department is responsible. The total amount so paid during the year 1900 was £338 15s. 5d. In addition to the payment of £30 for the annual railway ticket for the use of an agent of the Institute, the Department also paid £2 10s. for the passage of a pupil; £31 8s. was recovered from parents and others. The number of Government pupils at the end of 1899 was nine; three of these left during the year 1900, and nine others were admitted; the number of such pupils at the close of last year was accordingly fifteen.

The remarks above referring to the compulsory education of deaf children apply also to blind children.

MANUAL TRAINING AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

Last year was marked by the most important step that has yet been taken in this colony for the advancement of manual and technical instruction—namely, the passing of the Manual and Technical Instruction Act. Already a considerable impetus to progress in this direction is manifest, but the history of it belongs almost entirely to the present year (1901), and not to the year of which this report treats. Organizing Inspectors have been appointed, and the regulations required to give effect to the Act have been issued. The Act and regulations will, it is believed, offer a degree of encouragement to manual and technical education as liberal as is offered by the State in any part of the world. The Inspectors have already (August, 1901) visited nearly every part of the colony, have met teachers and others interested, giving model lessons and such information and advice as will enable local controlling authorities to begin work on the best lines or extend the work that has already been begun. The Inspectors have also in hand a series of small manuals suggesting suitable programmes of work in manual and technical classes. One of these, on “Modelling,” has already appeared, and two others, on “Woodwork” and “Cardboard modelling” respectively, will be ready shortly. One of the most satisfactory features of the movement is the degree of interest that is being manifested in regard to the introduction of hand and eye training into the schools of the colony, which is, it is satisfactory to note, most marked in the matter of the increasing adoption of kindergarten methods into the teaching of the infant classes. It is recognised that trained teachers are essential for effective work, and accordingly special grants, amounting to £1,875 in all, have been given to the Boards of Education to enable them to provide training for their teachers in those subjects prescribed by the regulations under the head of “Handwork” in school classes. Free railway passes are also being granted to teachers from country districts who attend such training classes. The extension of technical education proper will be sufficiently indicated when it is stated that since the passing of the Act there have been, exclusive of school classes, some forty or fifty applications for grants in aid of buildings, apparatus, and material.

The controlling authorities recognised are Boards of Education, governing bodies of secondary schools, university colleges, and, in the case of certain classes in existence before the passing of the Act, the managers of those classes. School classes, or classes held in connection with primary or secondary schools, are under the control of the Boards of Education or of the governing bodies respectively. “Special classes”—that is, continuation classes or classes for manual or technical instruction—established by the same bodies are also under their control. “College classes” are classes for higher technical instruction established and controlled by a university college. Classes may also be established by any suitable public association or corporation acting jointly with a Board of Education or university college; these are called “associated classes,” and all the contributing bodies may have a voice, according to the share of the cost of maintenance borne by them, in the election of the managers of the classes. The grants for capitation on the average attendance are twice, or nearly twice, as