

*Buildings.*—Though the buildings were by no means completed by the time when arrangements had been made to start the Day School, sufficient rooms were made ready to allow this to be done, and shortly after the evening classes were transferred to the new buildings. The College was formally opened by the Minister of Education on the 6th September, in the presence of a large gathering of representatives from the public bodies of the district. A third workshop for instruction in fitting and turning will shortly be erected. Towards the end of the year 1906 the representatives from the public bodies of Christchurch resolved with practical unanimity that the North Canterbury memorial to Mr. Seddon should take the form of additions to the Technical College. Subscriptions have so far been received amounting to about £630, and it is hoped that this may still be increased. With the Government subsidy the amount available is approximately £1,250, and, whilst this does not cover the cost, the Board is proceeding with the erection of an Assembly Hall, 70 ft. by 34 ft., which will be of very great value for our school assemblies, public meetings, physical-culture classes, and as a reading-room for evening students. This will be known as the Seddon Memorial Hall.

*New Classes.*—New evening classes were started last year in carriage-painting and sign-writing; and the entries for these—namely, fifteen and twenty-one respectively—form a sufficient justification for their formation.

*Trades Department.*—With the exception of two classes there has been a marked improvement in the trades department, especially in wool-classing and cabinetmaking. As regards the former, the Board has again been under great obligations to Mr. Walter Hill for generously supplying all the wool required throughout the session; but the class has been carried on under serious disadvantages for lack of proper accommodation. It is hoped that a room, properly equipped, will soon be provided for this most important work. When the State of Victoria, whose total wool-production is considerably less than that of New Zealand, has set apart a spacious building for technical instruction in the handling of wool, it is surely desirable that in this province, where wool is by far the most important product, and where farmers are becoming alive to the value of technical instruction, proper facilities should be available. The classes in cabinetmaking, which started in the middle of 1906 with two students, had forty-one entries last term, and we are anticipating such an increase this year that instruction on two additional evenings has been arranged for. The shop is now equipped with the woodworking machinery which came to hand in September, and was erected by the students under the direction of the instructor. An attempt was made during the year to revive the class in tailor's cutting, but the support given was insufficient to justify its continuance. Unless the attendance at the coachbuilding class improves during the present session this class also must be dropped, though it would be to the very great regret of the Board, which recognises how important the trade is to Christchurch, and how much its young workers need thorough technical instruction. Messrs. Boon and Moor, who kindly acted as honorary examiners to this class, said in their report, "We think something should be done by Parliament to amend the Apprentices Act, making it compulsory that apprentices should attend classes where there is a technical institution within the district where they are employed. In the coachbuilding trade there is a scarcity of competent workmen, employers finding it harder every year to get enough competent men to carry out their orders. We believe that if something is not immediately done in the matter workmen will have to be imported." This is giving expression to what seems a general feeling not only among the masters, but among the more thoughtful of the workers who have the future interests of the country at heart. The idea that the education of the child should stop at thirteen or fourteen is fast becoming in its turn as antiquated as the previous notion that for children who were to be manual workers education of any kind was not only unnecessary but harmful; and the next extension of our system must be in the direction of making education compulsory up to the age of sixteen or seventeen. It is desirable not only in the interests of the country, but of the individual; for the employment of four to six hours a week in self-improvement must tend to moral as well as to material welfare.

An important innovation this year in the trades department was an examination of the students' work at the end of the session by gentlemen unconnected with the College, who are especially well qualified to judge. Mr. Walter Hill very kindly examined the wool-classing, Messrs. Pearce and Stubberfield the carpentry and joinery, Messrs. Black and Southworth cabinetmaking, Messrs. Taylor and Colville plumbing, Messrs. Boon and Moor coachbuilding, Messrs. Gapes and Price signwriting, Messrs. Brabner and Hathaway carriage-painting. It is a matter of great value to the students and of great satisfaction to the Board to have had this work appraised independently by gentlemen of such high standing, and we are very grateful to them for devoting to it so much time and care.

*Commercial Department.*—Turning to the commercial department, the improvement has been no less marked, and that not only in the number of the students, but in the regularity of attendance and the standard of the work done. The credit of this is mainly due to the staff of highly qualified and earnest teachers which the Board has been fortunate enough to secure, but also in part to the greater length of the courses which the students are taking up. The liberal concessions which the Board has made to those who join for the whole session has induced the majority of them to enter upon a systematic course. I hope that before long there will be no students joining for one term only.

*Day School.*—The department of our work to which we look as the foundation of future success is our Technical Day School. This opened in the middle of last year with fifty-six pupils, and the numbers soon increased to over a hundred. Industrial, agricultural, domestic, and commercial courses have been arranged, and, with the exception of the agricultural course, the numbers are satisfactorily distributed. The scholars attracted by the school are in earnestness and good conduct decidedly above the average; and we anticipate with confidence that a sound foundation will here be laid for the more purely technical instruction to be given later.

J. H. HOWELL, Director.