

SUPERVISORS' REPORTS.

Central District (Mr. Varney).

WANGANUI.—Art.—At the close of 1907 Mr. D. Hutton, art master, resigned, and Mr. Seaward, A.R.C.A., was appointed in London by the High Commissioner for New Zealand. Few classes were organized until Mr. Seaward's arrival in April. Then Mr. Seaward's qualifications were such as enabled us to provide a more thorough course than we had previously been able to do. The life-drawing class was resuscitated, and a special class was added for more advanced work in figure-composition and design. These classes have met with much success, especially the former. Mr. Seaward's methods were entirely new to our students, but through his tact, courtesy, and enthusiasm, without the slightest friction, the old order has changed, yielding place to the new. It has been a source of gratification to find this important branch of our work raised to the high level to which Mr. Seaward has been able to raise it. Students are now evincing a desire to take up a course of work, aiming at thoroughly equipping themselves in the elementary subjects before venturing on more advanced branches of study. Some few students fail to gain the best out of the classes through their desire to arrive at the end almost as soon as a beginning has been made. This is one of the fruitful sources of failure. Would that we could teach our students to be patient, and trust more in the superior knowledge of their teachers. The teachers' art classes must have been distinctly beneficial to those who have had the privilege of studying with Mr. Seaward. A new ideal has been placed before them. An art school for teachers during the spring vacation proved most interesting to the eighteen who voluntarily gave up their holiday to the pursuit of knowledge. We have to thank the trustees of the Wanganui Museum for the privilege of using the Museum for the purpose of study.

Applied Art.—In this department marked progress has been made during the year. Leather-embossing and metal-work have been added to the curriculum, and in each class much fine work has been done. The wood-carving classes have done good work, and the attendance has been satisfactory. In the new subjects the number of pupils has not been so large as anticipated, but we feel sure that there is a fine future before both classes. Mr. Andrews, fresh from his visit to the Old Country, has at all times worked most assiduously for the welfare of the school. The modelling class was well attended all through the year, and capital work was done, especially by the advanced students.

A most interesting experiment in this department is worthy of note. Twelve children from the public schools were taken through a graduated course of elementary design, modelling, and wood-carving. The pupils first modelled and studied some plant-form; then they planned an original design, which they transferred to their wood, and worked out in incised carving. Afterwards the design was modelled in clay and carved in relief. The pupils showed a lively interest in their work.

Engineering.—The day course in engineering commenced with eleven students. Mr. S. Steele, B.Sc. in Engineering, resigned in July to take up an appointment in the Canterbury School of Engineering. Mr. J. Dawes and Mr. M. Stanley carried on the work of the classes in an efficient manner until Mr. Crow's arrival on the 13th August. Since Mr. Crow's advent the work of the Department has advanced by leaps and bounds, the enthusiasm of both instructors and students being much to be commended, and the classes have become deservedly popular. As the year advanced it became more and more apparent that further accommodation would be necessary if the best work was to be had out of the pupils, the crowded state of the workshop militating against successful work. Plans for new workshops have been submitted which it is hoped will meet with the approval of both the Board and the Education Department. It is a matter for surprise that the Government, which does so much for technical education, evidently recognising its importance, does not make some arrangement whereby its own employees at the Eastown workshops could be encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities afforded.

Artisan Classes.—These classes have, as usual, been well attended, and much excellent work has been done, especially in the practical classes. A marked feature of these classes is the interest shown in the apprentices' work by the various masters' associations. The plumbers have done exceptionally good work under Mr. Aughton in bossing and wiping, but there is room for much improvement in the theoretical classes, consequently each examination tells the same tale—very good practical work, indifferent theoretical. In the examination last December the percentage marks in the former was seventy and in the latter fifty-five, notwithstanding that one apprentice obtained full marks. The same position, to a certain extent, holds good in regard to the carpenters' classes; excellent practical work, and very fair drawing and building-construction.

Domestic Classes.—The dressmaking and millinery classes produced work of a very high order, and Miss Bohan is to be commended for the interest she displayed in her work and for the results achieved. The home nursing class suffered a change of teacher during the year, Nurse Pitt resigning and Nurse Creech being appointed in her place. Such a useful and interesting course of instruction should be of inestimable benefit to the students. The evening cookery classes were not so popular as in former years. We are much hampered for accommodation in the domestic side of our work, a room for dress-making and millinery being much needed.

Commercial Classes.—The classes in this section have, as usual, been popular, and much good work has been done. Now that the Board has appointed an expert in Mr. Cox, A.N.Z.A.A., we may in the future look for much more solid work than in the past. There is not such a tendency for boys to rush these classes as formerly, more taking advantage of the trade courses. During the year Mr. J. Butler, F.I.A.N.Z., resigned his position as instructor of advanced book-keeping and accountancy. He has served the Board splendidly for six years, and his loss will be much felt.

Wool-classing.—A class in this important branch of farm-work was opened in September last. On account of the proximity of the shearing season and the intervention of agricultural shows the course of lessons was not completed before Christmas, but we hope to finish this course and commence a new