

tions under which the classes are conducted have been obeyed with a minimum of friction, and the number of disciplinary cases dealt with has been very small. It is well known and only natural that a part-time teacher finds more trouble in maintaining discipline than a full-time teacher. It is much to the credit of the staff, and a testimony to the interest they are able to inspire, that troubles of this kind have been very few indeed. I can say without hesitation that the Board have never had better reason to be satisfied with the work, conduct, and attendance than during the past session. In the case of two classes only can the reports as a whole be considered as below the standard of "good," and even these would be termed "satisfactory." In certain others, to which I should like to call attention, there are features worthy of special mention.

The class that labours under the greatest difficulties is the one that has the best attendance record of all. The Belfast pupils do not get back to their railway-station until 5 o'clock, and then some of them have two or three miles to walk home. Yet what do we find? Out of eighteen boys on the roll thirteen have not missed a single attendance and two have missed only once; while the conduct of both boys and girls has been all that could be desired. Burwood has also a long distance to come, and some of the pupils live far from the tram, yet though their class starts at 9 o'clock the girls have made 96 and the boys 94 per cent. of the possible attendances, and in their reports nothing appears below "good." Woolston School sends, of course, larger classes, but twenty-three boys have never missed, twelve have missed only once; the girls have also a very good attendance record, while the work and conduct of both is "good," and in the case of the girls exceptionally so. The classes from St. Albans School have in the past established a high reputation, and this has been well maintained; thirty-three boys have not missed, seventeen have missed only once, while the record of the girls is little behind. In work and conduct both are "very good." Addington deserves to be classed with St. Albans, the reports for Standard VI being specially meritorious. In the case of Waltham each section of each standard has reached a high level, and two of the classes have been singled out by the instructor as particularly good. From Opawa S6 sixteen out of twenty-two boys have not missed, and three have missed only once, while both boys and girls have received no remark below "good" for either work or conduct. North Linwood is equally worthy of praise. Nineteen boys have not missed, and eight only once; while in Standard VI (girls) fifteen have not missed, and all are recorded as "very good." The above classes have been singled out only because of special merit, but I should like to emphasize again the fact that in most of the others the standard is not far below that of the classes commented on.

In connexion with the woodwork one curious fact may be mentioned—viz., that the best work has been done by classes from the schools adjacent to the centres, both Sydenham S6 and Normal S6 being decidedly above the ordinary level. In the case of the latter some of the boys have shown an almost embarrassing keenness to work after school hours. The exercises done by both these classes are highly creditable. This year a special effort has been made in the woodwork classes to encourage boys to think more about their work and as far as may be to express their own ideas in the construction of exercises. In many cases, especially in classes under Mr. Barrett and Mr. Hand, the experiment has been most successful—freedom has proved a decided stimulus. Here, as in other branches of education, it is by affording opportunities for self-development and individual initiative that we shall obtain the most fruitful results.

To encourage the boys who have done such really good work, and to give the general public an opportunity of making themselves acquainted with its character and the standard reached, it was arranged to hold an exhibition of exercises and drawings in the window of Messrs. Hastie, Bull, and Pickering, to whose kindness we are greatly indebted. The display was very favourably noticed by the Press of Christchurch, and attracted a good deal of attention, but experience showed that a larger window was necessary to do full justice. Should the exhibition be held another year it will no doubt be possible to make more adequate arrangements, and perhaps to extend it to include the work of the girls' department.

In the domestic-science department two innovations have been made. Formerly cookery and laundry-work have been kept quite separate, the latter instruction being confined to the last term, but during this session the two subjects have been joined in one course, thus providing great variety and helping to maintain better the interest in both. When laundry-work was first introduced it was not altogether popular, and a number of parents objected to provide the girls with the garments necessary for practice; but I am glad to say that this is now quite a thing of the past. Parents have come to recognize the practical value of the instruction given, and the serious difficulty of securing material has disappeared. The regulations of the Department now permit of combined courses of cookery and home-management covering a period of sixty hours, and advantage has been taken of this to give such instruction in certain classes in which Standards V and VI are taken together, and the duration of the lesson is one hour and three-quarters. At the end of the second term a conference of manual-training instructors was held to consider and to compare our methods of work. It was well attended even by instructors from the distant centres, and was generally felt to be most beneficial. In spite of the inconvenience and expense the conference entailed to several of the members, there was a unanimity of opinion that the annual conference was desirable.

I have no alterations or additions to buildings to report, though we are looking forward to such reorganization of the buildings at the Normal School when the new Training College is erected as will give a room for woodwork worthy of the importance of the subject, and where it may be carried out under as clean and hygienic conditions as obtain in an ordinary classroom. The provision of a good stove at the West Christchurch centre has added much to the comfort of the classes in winter, changing what has always been on frosty mornings a very cold place into a genially warmed workshop.