

NELSON.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE NELSON TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

Technical classes in the following subjects were held: Dressmaking, 8; millinery, 4; cookery, 4; arts and art crafts, 9; commercial subjects, 8; carpentry, 7; plumbing, 2; photography, 1; telegraphy, 2; chemistry, 1; botany, 1; engineering, 2; English and arithmetic, 3; French, 1; history and geography, 1; metal-work, 1; English and mathematics, 1. The number of pupils enrolled during the year were as follows: Junior free pupils, 95; senior free pupils, 86; other students, 247: a total of 428 students. The work of the school has, in spite of abnormal conditions, been carried on very successfully during the year. The number of paying students enrolled was slightly less than usual, but this was more than compensated for by the increased attendance, and the fact that more students took grouped courses of work. Twenty-nine students made the maximum number of attendances on which capitation is payable. The capitation claims for the year constitute a record for the school, amounting to £1,409, having doubled in four years. During the year the local bodies were approached with a view to subsidizing the school. The Nelson Technical School is the only one not receiving such support from the local bodies. The finances of the City Council were not in such a condition as to allow them to do so, which is very much to be regretted. As I have previously stated, there are several essential branches of work which should be fostered, but which from the nature of the work can never be self-supporting; in fact, the more advanced the subject the smaller the earning-capacity of the class. The commercial classes continue to be well attended, but the accommodation is far from adequate. The students from these classes find no difficulty in obtaining good situations in the various local offices. The art and craft classes were also well attended, and produced some very good work during the year. Of the domestic classes, those for dressmaking and millinery were well filled and did very good work. The day cookery class was moderately well attended, but the evening class in this important subject was a complete failure, only two students enrolling. The instructress resigned at the end of the year to take an appointment in Masterton. It was then decided to obtain the services of an instructress capable of taking charge of the whole of the domestic science department. The class for telegraphy was also very unfortunate, two changes of instructors occurring through the transfer of officers by the Post and Telegraph Department to other districts. The plumbing class, although depleted by the war of its older students, did some very excellent work, and made an excellent display of work at the annual exhibition of students' work. The engineering class met two evenings in the week and did a very good year's work, but more work could be done if more commodious premises and better equipment were provided. From the numerous inquiries from time to time it is very apparent that the establishment of day classes in this subject would be popular. Unfortunately, the present instructor's services are not available during the day. It will therefore be necessary to consider the question of the appointment of a suitable instructor.

If it is not feasible to consider the question of the erection and equipping of a larger and more up-to-date workshop I would suggest that temporary relief might be obtained by extending the present building. This would give an additional floor-space of something like 300 square feet. Classes for teachers in chemistry, botany, and drawing were held on Monday and Friday evenings and on Saturday mornings. These were not so numerous attended as formerly, owing to the new regulations allowing only teachers who were desiring to sit for examination for the D and C certificates to attend. Two classes for carpenters' apprentices were formed, but were only poorly attended, and this in spite of every encouragement given by the school and by the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, who kindly donated the sum of £5, and also paid the fees of such students as attended.

F. C. COCKBURN, Director.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE WESTPORT TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

It is satisfactory to be able to state that the year's work just closed is in advance of that of the previous year, in spite of the fact that there has been a steady decrease in the population of this district. The attendance at the school during the year, too, was interfered with considerably by an epidemic of measles. The total capitation and receipts from other sources for this year exceed the 1915 total by about £58, the respective amounts being £952 and £893. The work of the school has proceeded upon most harmonious lines during the year, the teaching staff without exception having exerted themselves to the utmost in the interests of their work and the welfare of the school generally. The annual exhibition of work fortunately coincided with the visit of the Minister of Education, who in formally opening the exhibition expressed his satisfaction at what he had seen during his visit of inspection. The exhibition was highly successful, notwithstanding that the weather at the time was unpropitious. I am pleased to report that the laboratory for domestic science and other science work is now an accomplished fact. The instructress in domestic science will be in a position to provide a thorough course in domestic science. By arrangement the science-room will also be used in connection with the secondary department of the District High School.

The day school and evening engineering classes and the commercial course have been most successful this year. In connection with the commercial course the need of a suitable room for typewriting is very great. A total of fifteen students were examined for senior free places, all of whom passed. The amendment of the regulations governing free places in technical schools which provides for holders of endorsed certificates of competency being admitted as free-place pupils is, I think, one that will be most beneficial, and have a far-reaching effect of great value.