

Considerable interest centred during the year round the syllabus of instruction given to boys taking the agricultural course, and the attitude adopted was that for a boy from thirteen to sixteen years of age, who intends ultimately to be a farmer, a sound education in English, mathematics, and science is the most important part of the training, so that his mental capacity may be enlarged at so receptive a period in his life. This idea has been followed out in framing the syllabus of all the courses, though the agricultural students receive instruction also in wool-classing, veterinary science, carpentry, blacksmithing, and ironwork, these being subjects in which instruction is not available for most boys after they start their farm-work. Reference to the numbers of students in the different courses shows that the agricultural classes compare unfavourably with the other classes, although steps have been taken each year to attract as many as possible to the course. It is hoped that with the services of a full-time instructor the class will grow till it has reached the number that it should have in the centre of a farming community.

The domestic-science classes have benefited during the year by obtaining the use of two rooms formerly used for manual training, cookery, and woodwork respectively. The domestic-science classes are now receiving an excellent course of instruction.

The workshop has been transformed at considerable expense, and has provided a large, bright room, well lighted and ventilated, for instruction in needlecraft subjects.

The engineering classes have grown so rapidly that an extension of the present workshop, the erection of a large smithy and an engineering laboratory, and the provision of proper rooms for machine drawing and woodwork have been planned, and it is expected that this work will be put in hand in 1919.

Students attending the school have competed successfully during the year in various examinations, including Pitman's, Shorthand-typists, Public Service Entrance, and Standard VI Proficiency. Satisfactory work has been done in the four different courses, but, as reported last year, difficulties still exist owing to the shortage of class-rooms. The laboratory is quite inadequate for the needs of the school, and at least two more class-rooms and another sewing-room are required.

School games have been carried on vigorously during the year, and creditable places have been taken in competitions by the girls' hockey teams and boys' cricket and football teams. The Cadet Company has also maintained a most satisfactory standard of efficiency, and interest in rifle shooting has been increased by the establishment of a rifle club.

The ex-students show always a keen desire to maintain their connection with the school, and the activities of the Old Students' Association have been varied and well supported. Seven years have passed since the school was established; it is pleasing to note already the large number of old boys and girls who are showing in this way their appreciation of early school associations. Before the Armistice with Germany was finally signed the number of old boys on active service was rapidly increasing, until in November more than fifty had left New Zealand or were in the military camps. Of these, five were killed or died of wounds, and one died in camp.

The influenza epidemic made itself felt in the school, and caused the session to terminate on the 12th November. For some time a part of the school was used as a children's hospital and crèche, whilst in the cookery-room a large band of voluntary workers rendered valuable services in the preparation of food for distribution among the sick and convalescent in Invercargill and its neighbourhood. Most of the teachers were able to assist in hospital or home nursing.

*Evening Classes.*—The number of individual students attending the evening classes has shown a slight increase this year, the number of enrolments being 549, as compared with 524 for the previous year. Whilst the enrolments in both technical classes and the Technical High School do not compare unfavourably with those in other towns of New Zealand, a study of the ages of students shows that the number under seventeen years in attendance at the former is too small for a town as large as Invercargill. In 1917, for example, out of a total roll number of 524, only 223 were under seventeen years of age, and a number of these were attending as second- and third-year students. This means that, although the high schools and the Technical High School attract a large number of pupils when they leave the primary school, there is still a large proportion who do not avail themselves of the facilities for continuation or technical education. These are mainly the pupils who do not reach the higher standards of the primary schools, and their failure to attend evening classes must be due in most cases to lack of interest, since under regulations issued by the Minister of Education in 1917 most boys and girls can obtain free tuition in the classes. For these pupils a measure of compulsion appears to be necessary, and even a compulsory course of continuation education in such important subjects as English language and literature, history and civics, and physical culture would undoubtedly have a beneficial effect mentally and physically on the rising generation.

The home-service classes had the advantage for the first time of properly equipped rooms for instruction in plain and invalid cookery and needlecraft subjects.

The commercial classes have again attracted large numbers of students, and it was found possible to start a fourth class in book-keeping for students desirous of qualifying for the University book-keepers' certificate. At the end of the session two students qualified for the certificate.

The interest shown in the trade classes during the session was possibly more satisfactory than it has ever been before. In view of the small number of plumbing apprentices in the town the plumbing classes are naturally small, but the engineering and woodworking classes showed marked increases in their numbers. The entries for the City and Guilds Examinations in trade subjects were numerous, possibly as a result of the importance attached to these examinations in the Arbitration Court awards. Instruction was given for the first time in boot-repairing, and the two classes formed were well attended.

The arts and crafts classes were not so large as in previous years, though the numbers have been very satisfactory, despite war conditions. The numbers attending classes for instruction