

The school was fortunate during the year in receiving bequests totalling some £5,500 under the wills of the late Richard J. Binns and Richard Hindley. It is probable that a considerable portion of these bequests will be allocated to the building of an assembly-hall, the absence of which is at present a distinct drawback to the work of the Technical High School. Of the Hindley bequest, however, £1,000 is specially appropriated to the provision of bursaries for poor students.

In spite of the difficulties under which the school laboured, your Inspectors were satisfied that the staff did excellent work, and have no doubt that the improvement noted during the year is an augury of still greater success in the future.

The courses at the Elam School of Art were largely remodelled during the year at the instance of the Department, with a view to providing a satisfactory training for students entering with the intention of taking a full course covering all branches of a general training in art, besides specializing in one or more crafts. This alteration had become necessary partly because the school now opens its doors to junior and senior free-place pupils as well as continuing to accommodate Elam free students. The necessary reorganization is by no means complete, but there is sufficient evidence already that the changes made will benefit the school as well as the pupils. The staff was strengthened during the year by the appointment in London of a recent *diplômé* of the Royal College of Art, Mr. W. N. Isaac, who received his early training in New Zealand, and attended the Royal College of Art as a New Zealand Expeditionary Force Scholarship holder. It is hoped before long to establish such courses and examinations in New Zealand art schools as will enable young artists to receive special and appropriate training as art teachers without having to go abroad for their certificates, though it will always be a great advantage to the young artist to study in Britain and on the Continent.

The Pukekohe Technical High School showed considerable increase in numbers over those for the previous year. The majority of the pupils took the general or commercial course, but some were preparing for agriculture. The school was handicapped as regards industrial and agricultural courses by lack of workshop accommodation. Provision was made by way of grant—money being advanced locally for Government debentures—for increasing the accommodation, and three wooden class-rooms were available at the beginning of the year. Grants were made towards the end of the year for workshops and a cookery-room on the technical-school site, to replace the former manual-training centre on the primary-school site, and also to provide accommodation for technical classes. The work of the school and the staffing arrangements were found satisfactory by your Inspectors, with the exception that, owing to lack of workshops, the more practical courses were not in evidence.

The Hamilton Technical School has developed considerably during the last three years. In 1920 there were twenty-five day pupils, in 1921 sixty-five, and in 1922 the school opened with 118 day pupils. There were also 160 evening-class pupils and over 800 primary pupils attending for manual training. The increase in attendance compelled the Board to arrange for new workshops. £3,000 worth of Government debentures were taken up locally, and a grant of this sum made to build and equip new workshops, the old workshops being converted into class-rooms. Several courses are offered in the day school, and evidently meet local needs, judging by the steady growth in numbers. The question must soon be faced at Hamilton either of establishing a technical high school or of reorganizing the provision for post-primary education by combining the functions of the high school and the technical school under one governing body and providing a number of courses of equal standing in the combined institution.

The same question awaits settlement in several of the larger towns outside the four main centres—for example, New Plymouth and Napier. The solution of the problem is not made any more simple by the fact that the technical high school is naturally a co-educational school, whereas there is in most centres a tendency for the secondary schools to separate the sexes.

There was a large falling-off in the number of technical classes in small centres, the total number of pupils being 707, as compared with 2,387 in the previous year. Of the fall, about 1,200 was purely nominal, due to the transfer of manual classes attending from private schools. A real drop of about 500 was due mainly to the provisions for compulsory attendance having been placed in abeyance by the Government, partly as a measure of economy, and partly because of a general opinion that compulsory classes were of little real value.

The Auckland Board protested against the abolition of compulsory attendance at evening classes, as also did the Ashburton Technical School Board. Other Boards, however, were equally strongly opposed to compulsory attendance at evening classes, and when the question was discussed at the conference of Boards and Directors the action of the Department was approved by a four-fifths majority of the delegates.

TARANAKI DISTRICT.

Technical classes in this district were confined to the three centres—New Plymouth, where the day classes enrolled about 200 pupils; Stratford, where a technical high school completed its first year of establishment in new buildings with a roll of 187; and Hawera, where the new buildings were occupied during the whole year, the total numbers attending being 227. It is clear from the numbers attending and the fact that these numbers must increase largely in the next year or two that these schools are justifying their establishment. In the case of Stratford and Hawera the accommodation has been planned on modern lines, and can be extended in accordance with the original plans to meet future requirements.

A Technical School Board was established during the year in connection with each of the three schools, and it is expected that a considerable increase of local interest will result from placing the control of each school in the hands of a local Board.

Evening classes throughout the district were affected by the restrictions imposed through the necessity for economy, as also by the discontinuance of compulsory attendance at evening classes.