

# Wellington Technical College.

By W. S. LA TROBE M.A. (DIRECTOR).



MR. ARTHUR D. RILEY (FIRST DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION, WELLINGTON).

## Introduction.

The Wellington Technical school has been established for twenty one years.

It was founded in 1886 by the Wellington Education Board under the name of the School of Design, and under the direction of Mr. A. D. Riley, who also had charge of the Drawing and Drawing examinations in the primary and other schools throughout the district.

The school was housed in temporary rooms in which classes were held in Drawing, Painting, and Modelling, and also in Mechanics Engineering and Architecture. Apparatus was obtained, largely through the generosity

of private people who were interested in the school.

The nucleus of a valuable library which now contains some 1600 volumes on Technical subjects was also formed.

The number of class entries in the School of Design in 1886 was 101, besides primary school teachers who devoted their Saturday mornings to the study of drawing, both at the central school and at the branch classes which were held in Masterton, Greytown and Newtown.

From the beginning the school improved steadily in numbers and in the quality of work done. In 1890 the class entries reached a total of 280. In 1892 the School of Design was removed to the first floor of the new Education Board Building in Mercer street. Rooms were divided off and furnished to accommodate Art, Architecture and Engineering Classes, largely by means of funds raised by subscriptions and entertainments. By the year 1895 the total number of class entries had risen to about 550. The class in Plumbing which had been lately added to the list of subjects included an average of forty entries.

In 1899 the Wellington Provincial Industrial Association gave £1500 out of Industrial Exhibition profits towards building a wing to the school. This magnificent gift carried with it a subsidy of £1500 from the Government. The Education Board was thus enabled to erect the set of offices, class room and laboratories contained in the Victoria street building. The erection of this building had a marked effect on the attendance and popularity of the school.

In 1900 the number of class entries was 850.

Up to the year 1902 the School was managed by a sub-committee of the Wellington Education Board, all financial arrangements being made by the Board.



MR. W. S. LA TROBE (PRESENT DIRECTOR).

At the beginning of 1902, during the chairmanship of Mr. J. R. Blair, it was resolved that the Technical School be placed under the management of an Associated Board of Managers, appointed as provided for and permitted by the Manual and Technical Act of 1902. The contributing bodies represented on the Associated Board were then (and still remain) the City Council represented by four members, the Wellington Education Board by three members, and the Industrial Association by one member.

The City Council gave £100 per annum (now raised to £250 per annum) and land valued at £600 per annum. The Education Board gave class-accommodation valued at £600 per annum.

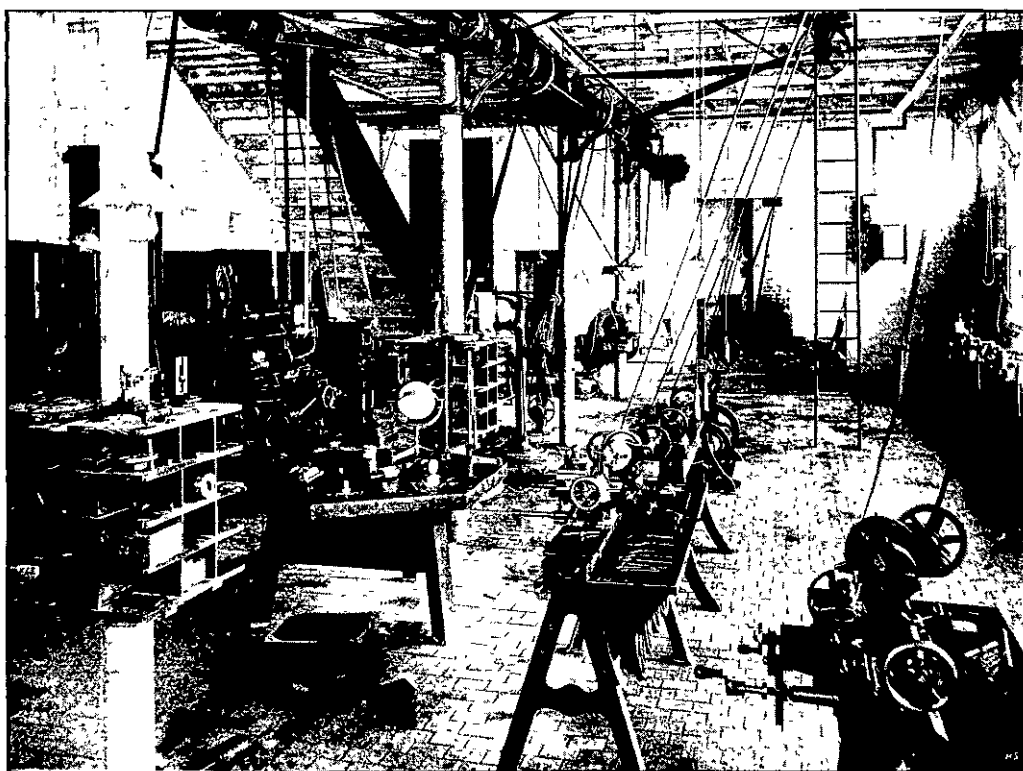
The Industrial Association received credit for its gift of £1500 in 1899, and also gave an annual donation of £25 to the funds of the School.

The new Board commenced with a clean sheet financially, and in spite of temporary embarrassments the school has continued since that date to pay its way, a state of affairs almost as satisfactory to the financier as it is unsatisfactory to the Educationalist who carefully studies the relative position of Technical Education in this country as with other parts of the civilised world.

In 1902, when the newly constituted Associated Board took over the control, the average number of class entries was 938.

The new Board of Managers immediately set about increasing the usefulness of the School, and to take advantage of the site given by the City Council, commenced to prepare plans for new workshops, for the Building and Engineering trades. The Government was approached in the matter, and the Minister for Education, at that time the late Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, promised £2500 towards the cost of erecting workshops.

Towards the end of 1903, Mr. A. D. Riley, who had conducted the school for eighteen years, and had nursed it through its early years from a small School of Design to a



THE MACHINE SHOP.