

The work of the schools has proceeded normally during the year, the effects of war conditions not making themselves felt to any unduly disturbing degree. Some teachers were granted leave of absence for service overseas, and many more were granted leave for Territorial training and for the Air Training Scheme. The supply of relieving teachers has been so far equal to the necessities of the situation, but all indications point to increasing strain as the man-power of the Dominion is mobilized for war service.

There was great demand for juvenile labour throughout the year, and many schools found difficulty in supplying the demands; others found their rolls seriously depleted towards the close of the year.

WAR WORK.

A definite move towards the establishment of training classes for skilled labour in various trades was made in June, 1940, and a representative committee was set up to consider and report to the Government. As a result of the activities of this committee, training classes in engineering practice (including welding) were started at the Wellington Technical School in November, 1940. Some fifty persons were selected for training to cover a period of sixteen weeks, more or less, and the school activities were so reorganized as to leave the workshops free for five hours per day for the purpose of this training course, without dispossessing the ordinary technical high school pupils and the technical school evening pupils.

The training given was either in fitting and turning or in electric and acetone welding. Great credit is due to the Board of the Wellington Technical School and to its Principal and the staff of the Engineering Department for their whole-hearted co-operation with the committee in order to facilitate the establishment of these classes, which involved a great deal of detailed and intricate work.

The scheme was inaugurated as an experimental one at Wellington, but, as its success seemed assured as it was started, arrangements were made to extend the training scheme to other centres. To this end regulations were gazetted for the setting-up of a Dominion Auxiliary Workers' Training Council, which was immediately convened and set to work to extend the training scheme to other centres, the next ones in order being Christchurch, Auckland, and Dunedin.

MANUFACTURE OF GAUGES.

In addition to the work of training, certain technical schools—namely Wellington Technical School, Auckland Technical School, and the Wairarapa College—were asked to undertake at short notice the manufacture of gauges urgently required for munition work. This piece of work was successfully accomplished, and much more would have been done had the necessity arisen.

COURSES IN INFANT CARE.

An experiment of some importance was carried out during the year at the Papanui (Christchurch) Technical School, whereby senior girls conducted a practical course in infant care and child nurture under the leadership of an expert in these subjects whose work in this and other post-primary schools in Canterbury was sponsored by the Christchurch Branch of the New Education Fellowship Trustees, who made a grant towards the salary of the teacher. The Government assisted also by means of a grant for the necessary furniture and equipment of the room, which was fitted up as a nursery school. Reports indicate that the experiment was a useful one, interesting not only the girls who took part in the course, but also many parents who observed the classes in action and had an opportunity of discussing some of their personal problems with the teacher. The experiment is regarded as a significant one both educationally and socially.

NOTABLE ADDITIONS TO SITES, BUILDINGS, AND EQUIPMENT DURING THE YEAR.

Pukekohe Technical School.—A grant was made of part-cost of the assembly hall, which was almost completed by the end of the year.

Hawera Technical School.—A grant was made for alterations to class-room accommodation and to the heating system, and a start was made upon the erection of an assembly hall.

Stratford Technical School.—A new home-science room and a woodwork-room were provided by Government grant, and these were expected to be ready for occupation by the beginning of the year.

Napier Boys' High (Combined) School.—A new workshop block was constructed to replace the block destroyed by fire the previous year. The workshops and laboratories have been re-equipped as far as possible in present circumstances, and work in them has been resumed.

Wanganui Technical School.—A grant was approved for alterations to the home-science, engineering, and art rooms in order to bring them up to modern standards.

Feilding Technical School.—Additional dormitory accommodation at the school hostel was provided, and a grant was made for the necessary material for the erection of a metalwork-shop.

Wellington Technical School.—A piece of land was bought by the Government for an extension of the site of the school; at present it will be used as a playing-area until the future needs of the school as regards buildings are clearly seen. A grant was made to convert an old building on the site into a welding-shop and to provide the necessary equipment. As a result, not only is an excellent detached welding-shop provided, but space has been set free in the main workshop block for a new machine-shop, which was urgently necessary.

Timaru Technical School.—An addition to the site on which was situated an old house was cleared and prepared for future extension of school buildings.

Dunedin Technical School.—Plans were drawn and approved for a new domestic-science block. Grants were made for alterations to the engineering workshops and for additional equipment.

Christchurch Technical School (Papanui Branch).—A grant was made for ceiling the workshops.

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