

take the trouble to articulate properly, and are trained themselves to speak so as to be easily understood by others. The power of understanding and of being understood thus acquired is made the stepping-stone to general education, as in the case of hearing children. If it were generally known that without special education deaf-mute children would grow up with minds almost entirely undeveloped, there would not be the repugnance there occasionally is now on the part of parents to allowing their children to go away from them for a time to the only institution in the colony at which they can receive that special education. The best service that parents or friends of such children can render them is to bring their cases under the notice of the Director at the time of his periodical visits to various parts of the colony, or under the notice of the Department by letter addressed to the Secretary for Education. Payment is not insisted on when parents are unable to contribute towards the cost of educating their deaf-mute children.

During the year 1899, 10 boys and 6 girls left, and 3 boys and 6 girls were admitted; at the end of the year there were 43 children—22 boys and 21 girls—at the institution. One of these was, for special reasons, boarded out in the neighbourhood. During the first half of the year the school was attacked by an epidemic of diphtheria, most of the cases being of a mild type. Fortunately, no fatal case recurred; and the recurrence of the outbreak has been guarded against as far as possible by the removal of its apparent cause. During 1899 the main portion of the institution, which had previously been rented from a private owner, was, with part of the land attached to it, purchased by the Government, which also bought some rising ground to the south-west, adjoining the former property; the whole, which comprises about eighteen acres, forms an excellent site for the permanent institution, and it is proposed to ask Parliament for a vote to enable the work of building to be begun at an early date.

The gross expenditure for the year ended 31st December, 1899, was £3,444 2s. 5d., made up as follows: Salary of Director and teachers, £1,339 2s. 1d.; steward, matron, and servants, £483; rent, 470; housekeeping, £778 17s.; travelling-expenses, £156 9s. 9d.; school material, £10 8s. 5d.; repairs and works, £55 3s. 11d.; clothing, £15 19s. 9d.; medical attendance and medicine, £44 2s. 8d.; water-supply, £21 19s. 6d.; sanitary precautions, £15 14s. 4d.; sundries, £53 5s. Less amount contributed by parents, £199 15s. Net expenditure, £3,244 7s. 5d. Cost of land and buildings purchased, £4,700; portion paid to 31st December, 1899, £2,700.

MANUAL TRAINING AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

The general remarks made in last year's report as to the importance and prospects of manual training in our schools, and of technical instruction for the youth of the colony, still hold good, and it is not necessary to repeat them here. It is not in the improvement of industrial processes alone that the general introduction of manual and technical training would produce good results, but in the gradual recasting of the whole educational system which it would involve—in the more complete adjustment of our intellectual and practical life to our actual environment which an enlightened scheme of this kind would certainly bring about. But the progress that can be recorded in New Zealand during 1899 is little, if any; in some places the movement has gone forward a little, in others it has gone back—in fact, no substantial progress can be looked for until substantial provision has been made by the legislature for its encouragement.

The new regulations for the examination of public schools give somewhat greater facilities for the introduction of hand-work into the course of primary school instruction; but without special grants for this purpose it is not likely that many Education Boards will be likely to encourage its introduction into their schools.

Table Y shows the administration of the resources afforded by the Act of 1895, the capitation paid on account of classes, and the amounts of special grants in certain cases.