

Summer School.—The first summer school was held at Wanganui, in January, 1902. It was very largely attended by teachers from all parts of the district. Dr. Smyth, M.A., late Chief Inspector, was the organizer, and to his efforts, combined with those of a strong committee of teachers, the success of the gathering was largely due. That the school bore abundant fruit is evident in a quickened interest in school-work generally, an insight gained into one or two forms of manual instruction, and a readiness on the part of teachers to experiment with new methods and break away from old and stereotyped lines of teaching. We have not yet determined upon our next summer school, but we hope, if possible, to arrange for a winter gathering, when an opportunity will be given to teachers of becoming further acquainted with one or two manual subjects, and of discussing the best methods of dealing with others.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE WANGANUI TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

The average attendance of students who attended the different classes of the school during the year was as follows: Day classes—drawing and painting, 12.25; wood-carving, 7; evening classes—drawing and shading from casts, 11.1; geometrical and perspective class, 19.6; machine-construction, 9.5; building-construction, 10.5; life class, 4.5; mensuration, 10; theoretical plumbing, 9; practical plumbing, 14.2; wood-carving, 15.75; modelling, 2.25; wood-carving, country classes, 16.5.

The evening classes, the students of which are mainly drawn from trade industries, have courses of instruction specially arranged to meet the requirements of the students. In addition to the elementary course of drawing, which all students are required to take, building-construction, theoretical plumbing, machine construction and designing, drawing and painting from the human figure, advanced geometry, and handwriting have been taught. Although the attendance at these classes is much more satisfactory than formerly, there is still much to be desired in this respect.

If the employers of labour realised the great benefit accruing to themselves by having a properly trained staff of assistants, with a cultivated taste in the various branches of their trades, and an ability to express that taste in their daily work, they would co-operate in securing the attendance of their apprentices at the various classes which are held in the school.

Three firms of this town, seeing the benefit of these classes, have paid the fees of their apprentices and compelled them to attend. In one case these apprentices did not avail themselves of the chance to improve their knowledge. I think parents and guardians should interest themselves in their children's education, instead of allowing the whole of their spare time to be spent in sport or an aimless walking about the streets.

The Evening Art Class.—This class has remained the same as last year, both in attendance and in the class of work. At the end of the first quarter Miss Browne was appointed to the Hawera Technical School, and Mr. James Richardson took charge of the classes. The subjects taught were chiefly drawing and painting from the cast and from groups of objects, drawing from the antique, and painting in monochrome. Good work was executed by the majority of the students.

Drawing and Painting Class.—The class was held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings, and was poorly attended. The work included still life, flowers from nature, outline from botanical specimens, combined with designs to fill given spaces. The students went out to study direct from nature once a week when weather permitted. The standard of work was much higher than that of previous years.

Saturday Classes.—The pupil-teachers and teachers attended the school every Saturday from 9.30 to 1.30. The work they have been engaged in was freehand from the cast and from photographic representations of ornament, drawing from models and objects on paper and on the blackboard, geometrical drawing, perspective, drawing on the blackboard from memory, and ambidextrous drawing of such figures as the circle, loop, spiral, and ellipse, and the application of these figures to design. Teachers and pupil-teachers have been advised to sit for the examinations of the Board of Education, South Kensington, London, as well as for the local examinations, for the reason that local certificates will only be recognised locally, whereas the South Kensington certificates are recognised all over the world. Since a reduction was made in the fee charged a number of children attending the primary schools now attend the Saturday classes.

Building-construction and Architectural Drawing.—This class has made considerable progress during the year. Lectures were delivered on the various departments of the construction of a building. The advanced class was engaged in the construction of domes and hand-railings, and in the designing of villas, &c.

Mechanical Drawing and Machine-construction.—The average attendance at this class continues to keep up with that for last year. The result of the examination of this class showed that the students had a good knowledge of the mechanical parts of an engine.

The elementary course included drawing mechanical details to a large scale from given formulæ. The advanced class was engaged in designing boilers and engines, and in drawing engines and machines from actual measurements, &c.

Plumbing Class.—This class was established during the year to meet the requirements of the Borough Council by-law which was framed last year, compelling every plumber practising to be certificated. The class has filled in a long-felt need of a course that would enable an apprentice to qualify for the examinations of the City and Guilds of London Institute, or for those held at Wellington. One drawback in connection with this class is that many of the students have to travel long distances from town in the prosecution of their trade, and have therefore to absent themselves from the class. These interruptions in their course dishearten them in their class-work. The practical plumbing class, which was commenced at the beginning of the third quarter under the charge of Mr. James Christie, has done some good work. Several students showed marked improvement in the handling of the tools and material. The Borough Council very generously voted the sum of £10 towards the class. I sincerely trust that they will see their way to vote a similar sum this year.