

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE HON. SUPERINTENDENT.

Although nominally initiated by the Dunedin Technical Association, the classes were from the first arranged for and entirely directed by the local provisional committee, and this committee took all responsibility and carried on till the Managers were duly appointed. Arrangements were made to open the session on the 1st May, and the number of students forthcoming were sufficient to enable twenty classes to begin operations. At the beginning of the second quarter two additional classes—one for Latin, the other for book-keeping—were formed, thus making twenty-two in all. During the year 90 male students and 201 female students, or a total of 291 pupils, were enrolled for instruction. The number of students entered for the various subjects for the two quarters is as follows: Continuation subjects—English, 51, 37; Latin, 7; commercial subjects—commercial arithmetic, 41, 34; commercial correspondence, 20, 10; book-keeping, 19; shorthand, (four classes), 53, 46; typewriting (four classes), 31, 30; technical subjects—cookery, 14, 9; drawing, 14, 6; dressmaking (five classes), 106, 95; plumbing, 17, 12; wood-carving, 11, 12.

With regard to the effort made to establish further classes at mid-session, my opinion is that it is seldom advantageous to do so at such a time. Either other classes are drawn upon or the working of that new class itself is detrimentally affected in the following year. Under the scholarship regulations forty-two scholars were granted free tuition, and, judging from the regularity of their attendance at class, and also from the number of certificates granted holders, I am of opinion that most of these free pupils have done very good work. Compliance with the scholarship regulations necessitated the attendance at English and arithmetic of the holders (forty-two) of free places. Consequently these classes were composed almost entirely of such pupils. But when it is recognised that the English class is for the study of selected works and for training and practice in composition rather than for mere formal grammar, greater numbers will avail themselves of the instruction offered. The same result will follow the continual teaching of arithmetic on practical lines. Latin is not likely to be sought by many of the Technical School pupils, and might without inconvenience be deleted from the list of subjects taught. With one exception, the classes for commercial subjects have been a marked success. In order that there may be no question regarding the ability of certificate-gainers in shorthand and typewriting, our Dunedin examiners in these subjects demand a high standard, no candidate making more than 2 per cent. of errors being granted a pass. Notwithstanding the stringency of the examination quite a number were successful, while those that failed all came near enough to feel keenly disappointed at their own want of success. Messrs. Rossbotham and Fraser report that the candidates sitting for shorthand give evidence of having been well and carefully taught, while Mr. Cohen regards the typewriting as very creditable for a first year's work. The practical instruction given in book-keeping has also been favourably commented upon, and, the attendance having been consistent, one may well assume that the efforts of the teacher have been reciprocated by his pupils. The attendance at the class for instruction in plumbing was satisfactory. Although the want of furnaces and fires entailed a start being made in sheet-lead work rather than with joining, the work of the class as a whole was good, and gave evidence not only of the soundness of the instruction, but also of a desire on the part of the students to profit by the instruction. Plumbers should, and evidently do, realise that they may not always have such facilities for increasing their knowledge and efficiency, and they are therefore exhorted to take every advantage of the opportunities afforded by the class carried on in connection with the Technical School. The wood-carving class, although satisfactory from a numerical point of view, cannot be regarded as fulfilling its function unless supported by wood-men and wood-workers. There is no great objection to classes for amateurs, but to be conducive to success separate classes at lower rates should be provided for workmen. Summarising, I have only to state that, after making allowance for the difficulty of a first year's undertaking, the Managers have every reason to feel pleased with the success attending the formation of these technical classes. The appointment of a permanent Secretary, and the closer study of the regulations by the members of the teaching staff, would facilitate matters next year.

ANGUS MARSHALL, Hon. Superintendent.

SOUTHLAND.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE EDUCATION BOARD.

The report of the Board's Director of Technical Instruction affords ample testimony to the success achieved by classes carried on during the year, and gives detailed information respecting the number of students in attendance, and other aspects of this department of the Board's operations. The completion of the new Technical School buildings, for which a special grant has been made by the Department, has now been undertaken, and this work, when completed, will greatly facilitate the prosecution of this branch of education. A contract, at £2,850, for the erection of the building, was entered into in August last, and the work is now (March) approaching completion.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS.

Instruction of Teachers.—The special grant of £150 made by the Department for the instruction of teachers was profitably spent. Two courses of lectures in botany and nature-study were delivered on consecutive Saturdays, at Invercargill and Gore respectively, by Mr. George M. Thomson, F.L.S., F.I.C., of Dunedin. At these classes there was a very large attendance of teachers and pupil-teachers from all parts of the district accessible by railway. The lectures were most interesting and profitable, were much appreciated by the students, and will doubtless result in more effective treatment of these subjects in the various schools of the district. Classes in the subject of drawing—model and blackboard—under the charge of the late Mr. J. J. McLean, were also established, and carried on during the winter months, and much effective work was done.