

to provide facilities for necessary agricultural instruction, the local bodies at Motueka, Riwaka, and Takaka were approached, and responded so willingly with financial help that tenders are now being called for the erection of a laboratory at Motueka, while a similar room at Takaka will be provided within the year.

*Westport District.*—After some years of agitation and correspondence the proposed Technical School for Westport has at last materialised, and a brick building costing £1,385 is now approaching completion. Of this cost, £1,000 was granted by the Department and £100 subscribed by the Westport Harbour Board, Borough Council, and Buller County Council. In consideration of the requirements of the district, the building will be used mainly for instruction in mechanical engineering, in which subject both day and evening classes will be conducted by the special permanent teacher engaged by the Board. It is in the establishment during the coming year of what is virtually an engineering secondary school for boys between thirteen and eighteen years of age that the main development of technical education in the district may be looked for. A grant of £325 has already been made by the Department for mechanical workshop fittings, which are now on their way from England. During the past year dressmaking, commercial, and art classes have been held at Westport; dressmaking classes at Waimangaroa, Denniston, Millerton, and Seddonville; and a class in mechanical drawing at Denniston; at all of which fairly satisfactory attendances have been made.

*Reefton District.*—During the year a departmental grant enabled the Board to complete the equipment of the woodwork room at this centre; but, with the exception of classes in drawing and dressmaking, no move was made in the extension of instruction for adults. In the arrangement of schemes for the advancement of technical instruction throughout the district the Board has met with whole-hearted assistance from many local bodies. To place agricultural instruction on a sound financial basis and to provide special facilities for practical work, local bodies at Motueka subscribed £60, Takaka County Council voted £20, and Collingwood County Council £10. £100 was donated in the Westport district towards the establishment of the Westport Engineering School, and Inangahua County Council granted £15 and Richmond Borough Council £5 towards the upkeep of manual-training centres in their districts. Only at Nelson, where the greatest facilities are provided, is the work carried on without municipal support. The system adopted in the past has resulted in the Nelson Technical School being carried on at a loss that has been borne by other parts of the district, but with the reorganization of the work the school must pay its own way before further developments can take place, and such developments are impossible without outside assistance. Of the instruction imparted throughout the district, it is gratifying to notice that art classes are being conducted on proper principles, though it is difficult to make students appreciate the benefit of taking courses of instruction in design. The various trades classes have done satisfactory work, but here the need of the specially trained instructor is evident. It cannot be said that any of the dressmaking classes throughout the province have quite fulfilled their educational functions. The same remark applies to all of the commercial classes. It is difficult to secure both instructors and students who can appreciate the difference between the making of dresses and instruction in dressmaking, or the teaching of shorthand, typing, &c., and the taking of a course of commercial instruction. These points require attention during the coming year. Continuation classes generally have for obvious reasons produced better work than technical ones. The agreement entered into by free-place holders that 80 per cent. of attendances must be made throughout the whole year has done much to improve the attendance and the quality of the work.

Owing to the limited time during which Mr. Bruce's services were available for the Nelson Board, little could be done in the way of agricultural classes for farmers. Courses were successfully carried on at Takaka and Wakefield, and single lectures delivered at a few centres, but the demand for instruction by Mr. Bruce was more than he could undertake. This led to the determination of the agreement with Westland and Grey Boards, and an arrangement whereby Mr. Bruce's services are now available in this district for nine months annually. This will give opportunity for the extension of courses of instruction for farmers which they have previously been denied. It is anticipated that, with a number of classes being conducted during 1909 and the generous assistance of local bodies, no additional strain will be thrown on the Board's finances, despite the extra liability incurred through the cutting-out of the two West Coast Boards from the agricultural arrangement.

Saturday classes for the instruction of teachers were held both at Westport and Nelson. At the former place they received such poor support from the teachers, and were so irregularly attended, that a continuance of the system in future years on the Coast would not be warranted without some previously guaranteed support.

At Nelson, drawing, agriculture, botany, and woodwork classes were conducted, but of these I consider only the first-named justified, by support and by work accomplished, its formation. The botany and agriculture classes conducted by Mr. Bruce certainly deserved a much better attendance than was given them by teachers. During the third week in December an innovation in the training of teachers was made by the holding of a summer school at Westport. This was attended by fifty-six teachers, who came from as far away as Murchison, Reefton, and Karamea; and, though the school may not have fulfilled all that the most sanguine expected of it, yet I believe the handwork course alone was enough to justify the cost and the temporary disorganization of school-work. I would point out that it is only by such special schools of instruction that we can reach the teacher remote from the railway-line, and it is usually that teacher, isolated from such associations as will furnish the latest ideas, and working under many difficulties, to whom the instruction is of most benefit.

Throughout the year all requisitions made by the Board to the Department have received most prompt and fair consideration, the central authority having plainly shown that it is prepared to help wherever steps are taken to provide manual or technical instruction in accord with the requirements of the district. In conclusion, I desire to express my thanks to the Board's Inspectors and Secretary for the ready help they have rendered in many ways, and to my technical staff for their enthusiastic work during the year.

A. A. HINTZ, Director.