

and we see no reason why equally good results may not be achieved in Southland, the teachers of which are no less intelligent, capable, and enthusiastic than those who labour in other parts of the Dominion. Most of the Southland teachers who have already taken up or who contemplate taking up this subject, are men and women of considerable experience in their profession, and all of them have furnished evidence that they are possessed of some practical knowledge of and a liking for cottage-gardening. The Board has already done something to equip its teachers more fully for this special work in that it has established classes the instruction in which has more or less direct reference to the teaching of agriculture. Amongst these may be mentioned the classes in botany (conducted by Mr. G. M. Thomson), agricultural chemistry (Mr. G. D. MacIndoe), and practical gardening (Mr. Sampson). The last-named class was established last year in order to enable candidates for a departmental certificate to comply with a provision of the regulations governing the examination of teachers. This provision required from a candidate, who wishes to be examined in elementary agriculture a preliminary certificate showing that he has satisfactorily completed an approved course of instruction in the subject. The purpose of the provision, it is explained, is to secure that the basis of the examination shall be intelligently directed practice of a suitable kind, and not mere book-work. We are confident that we shall be able to make from year to year such arrangements for providing this practice as shall be satisfactory to the Department, the cost being charged against the grant for the training of teachers. In Southland there are now, as we stated above, thirty-two classes in elementary agriculture conducted at the larger schools in the district. Not a few of the School Committees manifest a lively interest in the classes, and render assistance in fencing the plots, in providing cereals, and in other ways. The local mercantile firms in town have also become interested, and, recognising the value of this form of instruction, have signified their willingness to assist in the successful establishment of the classes by valuable donations. For instance, the Southland Frozen Meat and Export Company donated all the manures, while Messrs. Sutton and Sons, per Mr. Tothill, donated all the garden and field seeds required for this season's operations. An effort is being made to erect a small tool-house in connection with each garden, in order that the tools provided by the Education Department may be suitably housed and cared for. Towards this object the New Zealand Pine Company have promised a considerable quantity of the timber required, and other firms are being approached for assistance. We are hopeful that before the end of the season every garden will be provided with this necessary convenience.

*Special and Continuation Classes.*—A comparison of the prospectus of evening classes conducted in this district under the Manual and Technical Instruction Act with prospectuses issued elsewhere will show that, when all the circumstances conditioning our operations are considered, Southland does not lag behind other centres in regard to the number of classes; and the comparison is equally satisfactory in respect of the number of students and the quality of the work accomplished. But in certain centres technical instruction has been extended to a degree hitherto found unattainable in this district, and this extension, in some cases at least, has been rendered possible by the fact that there appears to be some sort of relation between the attitude of the people towards technical education and their latitude: the further north one goes the better disposed do the public seem to be towards technical schools and their work, and the easier it is for the directors of such schools to collect contributions in support thereof. And as these carry a subsidy of £1 for £1 from the Department, a controlling authority may have at its disposal from this source a very substantial sum in addition to the income accruing from capitation and fees.

The following subsidies on voluntary contributions were paid by the Department to various centres for 1907: Otago, £358 17s.; South Canterbury, £450 6s.; North Canterbury, £626 11s.; Wellington, £653 8s.; Wanganui, £1,083 19s. 9d. (including £506 subsidy on contributions for buildings); Auckland, £10,713 4s. 2d. (including £10,000 subsidy on contributions from Savings-bank Trustees). By the aid, in large measure, of voluntary contributions and the subsidies thereon, there has been established in each of the city centres, Auckland, Napier, Wanganui, Wellington, and Christchurch, a technical day school which is specially intended for the free education of those pupils who have obtained certificates of proficiency, and which serves as a stepping-stone between the primary school and the technical evening school.

In these schools courses are available in some or all of the following—Commerce, domestic pursuits, trades and industries, art and agriculture; while instruction is also provided in advanced English and mathematics (as for Standard VII). The school terms and the school hours in most cases closely coincide with those of the primary schools—i.e., from twenty-five to thirty hours a week for from forty to forty-two weeks a year. A junior free place in a technical day school is tenable for two years, and, conditionally on his passing the qualifying examination at the end of this period, the holder of a junior free place becomes entitled to free education for a further period of three years either at the day school or at the evening technical school. The income derived from capitation may amount to about £15 per free pupil per year. The most popular, and, by consequence, the largest grant-earning courses are the commercial and the domestic—i.e., the course providing instruction in such subjects as book-keeping, typewriting, shorthand, commercial history, commercial geography, commercial correspondence and *précis*-writing, business method and office routine, &c., and the course providing instruction in such subjects as cookery, needlework, dressmaking, laundry-work, hygiene, &c. It appeared to us that in some of the technical schools the curricula arranged for the pupils taking these two courses were almost exact replicas of those found in some secondary schools, the most material difference being that the syllabus of the technical day school makes no provision for the study of any language besides English. Having previously given some consideration to the question of establishing a technical day school in Invercargill (see report of Director of Technical Instruction for 1904), we took occasion to interview the Inspector-General of Schools in order to learn what prospect there was that a proposal to this effect would receive departmental sanction. Mr. Hogben's reply was unfavourable. The Depart-