

and the Board's instructor reports that considerable all-round improvement was noticeable in the general neatness and arrangement of the plots. In an important dairying district like Taranaki a greater number of our schools might reasonably be expected to take up the subject of dairying, especially in the higher classes. The subject could well be taken in conjunction with the agricultural course, and, as suggested last year, a good deal of the work could be taken during that period of the year when very little agriculture can be done. However, it will be readily recognized that to get the best results with their classes the teachers themselves must be thoroughly competent to impart instruction. With a view to enabling teachers to make themselves conversant with the course required in dairying, and, if need be, to qualify in this subject for the Teachers' C Certificate, a course of lessons in both the theory and practice of dairying was carried on at the Teachers' Saturday Classes. Unfortunately, only a few teachers took advantage of the opportunity afforded. If this subject is to take its proper place in the education of our children, it stands to reason that our teachers must equip themselves for the teaching of it. In connection with school classes special mention might be made of the success that has attended the establishment of rural classes in connection with the Stratford District High School. The course of instruction embraces English, arithmetic, book-keeping, botany, physical measurements, drawing, dairying, agriculture, cookery, woodwork, and dressmaking, and the attendance at the classes so far has been most encouraging. Every credit is due to Mr. Tyrer, the headmaster, who has gone wholeheartedly into the matter and has left no stone unturned to make the classes a success.

*Teachers' Classes.*—Saturday classes for the training of teachers were again held during the year at New Plymouth and Stratford, and included, among other subjects, cookery, drawing, physiology and first aid, botany, nature-study, dairying, chemistry, and cardboard-work. At the end of the session, several of our teachers came up for the Handwork Examination conducted at New Plymouth by the Education Department's Inspector. For the City and Guilds Examination five teachers presented themselves in cookery, and were all successful in securing a first-class pass. The success achieved must be very gratifying to the instructress. Undoubtedly, from the standpoint of the Taranaki District, the class that should have received the greatest support was that of dairying, for it will be readily recognized that great benefit would be derived if this subject were made part of the science course in the higher classes of our schools. Unfortunately, the Saturday class in dairying was poorly attended, but what was lacking in numbers was made up for by the enthusiasm and interest shown by the students. Three of those who attended the class presented themselves in this subject for the Teachers' C Certificate, and it is pleasing to note that they were rewarded by receiving a pass. It is to be hoped that the successes recorded above may act as an incentive to other teachers to come up for examination in the subjects of the Saturday course. I have to thank Dr. Fookes, who again, at great inconvenience to himself, conducted the class in physiology and first aid, and thus enabled four of our teachers to secure a pass in the examination conducted by the St. John's Ambulance Association.

*Technical and Continuation Classes.*—Technical classes were held during the year at New Plymouth, Stratford, and Inglewood. Three hundred and seventeen students were enrolled at New Plymouth, 156 at Stratford, and 15 at Inglewood, as compared with 230, 86, and 15 in 1908. For the first time a class in dressmaking was conducted at Waitara, but received scanty support, only five students being in attendance. Although the numbers quoted above show a satisfactory increase on those of the previous year, it is a matter for regret that the numbers in attendance at classes such as plumbing and carpentry have steadily decreased. It is difficult to account for the indifference to technical training on the part of those for whose benefit the classes have been established. The opinion has often been expressed that employers might do a great deal in the direction of securing the attendance of their employees at the classes. In this connection an extract from the 1908 report of the Minister of Education may not be out of place as showing the various means adopted by employers in some countries to induce their workpeople to attend technical schools: "Not a few, for example, find it in their interests to give employees 'time off,' often without loss of pay, to enable them to attend day classes at technical schools. Other means adopted are payment of fees; refund of fees on condition of satisfactory attendance; increase of wages and special privileges; payment for, or loan of, books and apparatus; scholarships, bursaries, and prizes; increased prospects of promotion; acceptance of time spent at the technical school as part of apprenticeship. If employers elsewhere find that it pays to place as few obstacles as possible in the way of the educational advancement of their employees, it should not be too much to hope that employers in New Zealand will be moved to follow their lead when and so far as local conditions permit. Some of them, it is pleasing to record, are already doing something in one or other of the directions indicated. It is to be hoped that their example will speedily be followed by others, for it is beyond question that the advancement of technical education in New Zealand depends to no small extent on the enlightened attitude of the employer towards the technical schools." During the year two of our students presented themselves for the City and Guilds of London Examination in plumbing, and were granted a pass in the ordinary grade. As showing the excellence of the instruction imparted in the plumbing class, it may be mentioned that year after year students of this class have sat for the City and Guilds Examination, and have passed with credit to themselves and to the instructor. It would be most unfortunate if from lack of support this class were allowed to fall through. The fact that the Department has spent large sums of money in erecting and equipping technical buildings in the larger centres of population with a view to improving the knowledge and skill of our artisans is, in my opinion, sufficient reason why legislation should be introduced making compulsory the attendance of those for whose benefit the expenditure has been incurred.

In conclusion, I have to thank the instructors for the efforts they have put forth during the year to make the work a success, and also to express my appreciation of the assistance rendered by the Press in the interests of the classes.

W. A. BALLANTYNE, Director.