

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE MANAGERS OF THE MASTERTON TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

The fifteenth year's course of instruction at the Masterton Technical School was commenced on Monday, the 20th March, and was continued throughout three terms of twelve weeks each, until Saturday, the 9th December, 1911. In the course of this period 25 classes were conducted, and instruction was given in the following subjects: Painting, freehand, model, and perspective drawing, light and shade, general drawing, drawing from life, machine and building construction, dressmaking, plumbing, commercial work, shorthand and typewriting, wool-classing, English and arithmetic, and Civil Service subjects. Arrangements for the formation of classes in veterinary science, art needlework, and electricity and magnetism were also in course of progress, but owing to various reasons the establishment of classes for instruction in these subjects had to be held over for the present. Taken on the whole, the attendance of pupils at the classes was very satisfactory, the average roll number being 264, whilst the average number of pupils in attendance during the whole of the period now under review was 204.

In accordance with the custom obtaining in former years the classes were again thrown open to the admission, as free pupils, of holders of Standard VI proficiency certificates, and no less than 50 pupils availed themselves of the privilege thus extended them. Forty-four of these succeeded in earning for the school the special capitation grant allowed by the Education Department in respect of free-place holders. The remaining 6, owing to illness, removal from the district, or other reasons, failed to make the necessary percentage of attendances. Referring to the classes generally, there appears to be a strong demand for instruction bearing on commercial lines, whilst little interest or enthusiasm has so far been evinced in connection with classes bearing on the artistic side of life. To such an extent was this the case that, whilst as many as 49 pupils came forward for the commercial course, the highest number presenting themselves for instruction in any branch of art was 8, and the average number on the roll of the various art classes was 6. Considering the splendid facilities the Masterton Technical School affords to art students, the Managers are disappointed that there should have been so little response during the past year. Now that the art-room is well equipped in respect to its lighting and furniture, it is hoped that a much larger number of students will enrol in the art classes during the current year. Wool classes under the auspices of the Technical School were conducted by the wool instructor, Mr. E. L. Lees, at the following subcentres: Tinui, Bideford, Te Wharau, Waikaraka, and Gladstone. These classes were on the whole well attended, no fewer than 103 students coming forward for instruction during the first term. In the second term, however, principally owing to the bad weather, and also to the fact that the sheep were beginning to require the constant attention of the settlers, the attendance was not nearly so good. Judging from the experience gained the Managers are inclined to believe that a better plan for conducting wool classes at such sub-centres as those now referred to would be to send an instructor out for a week or ten days to each centre, where he could then complete his course of lectures before moving on to the next point of instruction. By the adoption of such a system as that just indicated, not only would the pupils receive the advantage of a continuous course of instruction, but they would also benefit to the extent of the decreased cost for travelling. At all events, the scheme seems to be one worthy of consideration. During the year the co-operation of the Masterton Agricultural and Pastoral Association was sought in connection with the establishment of classes affecting the agricultural and pastoral interests of the community, and the association responded by appointing one of the members of its committee, Mr. Welch, to attend meetings of the Board of Managers in the capacity of an advisory member. Owing, however, to the lateness of the year, and also to the fact that no new classes bearing on farming interests were contemplated, it was found unnecessary to invite Mr. Welch's attendance. Looking forward to the coming year, however, the suggested formation of classes for instruction in veterinary science, wool-classing, and similar subjects affecting the farming population, the Managers will gladly welcome as an advisory member the representative appointed by the Agricultural and Pastoral Association. Mr. E. C. Isaac, of the Education Department's inspectorial staff, visited the school from the 10th to the 15th May, and a satisfactory report on the condition and conduct of the school was subsequently forwarded to the Managers. In his report the inspector recommended additional furniture for the art-room, and this has since been obtained. Referring to the work of the plumbing class, Mr. Isaac acknowledged the disability under which the class labours owing to the frequent absence of pupils caused by the claims of country work. The accompanying statement of receipts and expenditure in respect of the year ended the 31st December, 1911, shows the receipts for the year to have amounted to £900 19s. 7d., whilst the disbursements during the same period, including a debit balance of £18 3s. 3d. carried forward from last year, amounted to £780 10s. 8d., thus leaving a credit balance at the end of the year of £120 8s. 11d. It is perhaps worthy of remark that this is the first occasion on which an audited statement has been available for submission to the annual meeting of subscribers, which in accordance with the Act must be held during the months of January or February in each year. In conclusion, the Managers desire to take this opportunity of thanking all who have assisted them in their efforts for the advancement of technical education in this district. Special acknowledgment is now made of the valuable financial assistance rendered by the Education Department, the Masterton Trust Lands Trust, the Masterton Borough Council, and the Tinui branch of the Farmers' Union. The Managers wish also to thank the staff for its loyal co-operation, and the Press for its unfailing courtesy and valuable assistance on all occasions.

W. H. JACKSON, Chairman.
N. D. BUNTING, Secretary.