

The evening classes in Invercargill were conducted on much the same lines as in former years. The attendance at these classes fluctuates very considerably, and last year proved no exception to the rule. One or two of the classes placed on the syllabus failed to proceed owing to lack of students. Others, again, were attended by larger numbers than in 1911. The work accomplished, however, was well up to the average in general excellence. 290 individual students were enrolled, this number being seventy-nine less than last year. Evening classes in technical and continuation subjects were conducted at Greenhills, Waimahaka, and Nightcaps. Wool-sorting classes were held as last year at Invercargill, Mossburn, Lumsden, Balfour, Wendonside, Riversdale, Mandeville, Gore, and Mataura, and were attended in all by 141 students. These classes have proved very popular with the farming and mercantile community.

In every primary school in the district, with one exception, there is being carried on some form of hand-and-eye work. 1,000 boys and 938 girls in no less than seventy-two schools received instruction in woodwork and cookery at one or other of the manual-training centres at Invercargill, Riverton, and Gore. This result is rendered possible by the exceptional railway facilities available in Southland. All the railway-lines converge on these three towns, and the children are carried to and from the manual-training centre free of charge. This is a great boon, the real value of which time alone can adequately disclose.

The teaching of elementary agriculture has made considerable progress during the year. Mr. Moodie, the Board's instructor, has entered most enthusiastically into his work, and a good broad foundation has been laid on which the visible superstructure will be reared as the years go by. When Mr. Moodie took charge agricultural classes were being conducted at forty-one schools. During the year thirty-one other schools took up the subject, making a total of seventy-two. During this year it is confidently expected that elementary agriculture plots will be established at over a hundred schools. School Committees and teachers are being interested in the work, and, as opportunity offers, the instructor lectures at such centres as can be advantageously visited, and in this way much valuable information and practical instruction is given which cannot but result in material benefit to the State.

Owing to the appointment of an Agricultural Instructor and the desire of the Board to encourage the introduction of this subject into as many schools as possible, instruction in this branch of education was made the leading feature in the Saturday teachers' training course. As it was found impossible for the instructor to attend and conduct classes both at Invercargill and at Gore on one day, the series of classes hitherto conducted at Gore was discontinued and the work was concentrated at Invercargill. Two classes were formed, and both were largely attended, the combined numbers totalling 100. In addition to the theoretical instruction given in the class-room, the agricultural plot at Gladstone was laid under tribute, and several visits were made there for active practical work. A visit was also paid to the nursery at Waikiwi owned by Messrs. J. Lennie and Sons, who most kindly placed their extensive grounds at the disposal of the instructor. A plot of ground adjacent to the central school was also brought into use, and a model school-garden was instituted. Altogether, valuable work was accomplished, and the teachers who attended the classes received such an insight into the work as will enable them to conduct successfully agricultural classes in their own schools and grounds. At the request of a number of teachers, who desired to study zoology for certificate examination purposes, a class in this subject was established and placed under the charge of Mr. R. Gibb, who did excellent work. The class was attended by twenty-seven students. The other subjects placed on the syllabus were advanced needlework, elementary physiology and first aid, freehand and model drawing, blackboard drawing, brush drawing, English for D, mathematics for D, and school method. Next year classes will be resumed at Gore.

The addition to the College building was completed and equipped during the early part of the year. A suitable class-room was also erected at the Gladstone agricultural plot. These works, together with the fencing of the College grounds, the erection of a boys' pavilion, and the conversion of the old manual-training room into a girls' pavilion, comprised the chief building operations undertaken. The boys' and girls' playgrounds were also levelled and gravelled, and are now in fair order. The erection of the engineering workshop will be undertaken next year.

At the annual examinations held during the month of July under the Board of Education, South Kensington, and the City and Guilds of London the following successes were obtained: Freehand drawing, one first-class and eight second-class passes; model-drawing, one first-class and four second-class passes; light and shade, two second-class passes; drawing from the antique, one first-class and three second-class passes; architecture, one second-class pass; plumbing, three passes; cabinetmaking, one second-class pass; carpentry and joinery, one second-class pass; wood-work, one pass.

The balance-sheet shows a debit balance of £2,199 17s. 10d. There are, however, assets in the form of capitation earned but not yet paid, grants due from Government, and other items, amounting in all to over £3,000. This sum is more than sufficient to liquidate the debit balance and to meet all outstanding liabilities. This is very satisfactory, especially in view of the fact that out of ordinary revenue two very important works have been undertaken. First, there has been purchased, improved, and fenced, at a cost of considerably over £1,000, the section adjoining the College on the western side, now used as a boys' playground; and, second, there has been erected and equipped, at a cost of over another £1,000 more than the grant obtained for the purpose, the College hall and class-rooms at the rear of and attached to the original building. The technical department, therefore, is in a sound financial position.

The Board again desires to thank the Education Department for the courteous consideration given to the various requests made during the year. Mr. E. C. Isaac, the Organizing Inspector of Manual and Technical Education, visited Invercargill during the year and assisted with much helpful advice. The staffs of the various departments have also done excellent work, and the utmost harmony has prevailed. To all I desire to tender hearty thanks for willing service rendered and kindly assistance received.

W. McCaw, Director.