

Twenty-two students and forty-five teachers were taking the course at the beginning of the year, but these numbers were reduced to eighteen students and twenty-four teachers at the close of the year. The standard of the work taken was that of the Class C examination. Much inconvenience was caused in the practical course for want of suitable ground for experimental purposes. This defect has now been rectified.

Mr. Malcolm, my predecessor, found it necessary, principally for health reasons, to resign his appointment with the Board during the year, and my appointment took effect from the 1st September. It is with the greatest pleasure that I record the unstinted praise of both Mr. Malcolm and his work that is meted out to him by the teachers of the district; and to Mr. Amess, my loyal and capable co-worker, I have to record my best thanks. Two special lectures on the "History and possibilities of the school-garden movement" were delivered towards the close of the year at Christchurch and at Ashburton to a total attendance of over a hundred teachers. No outside work with the farming community has been undertaken this year, but it is hoped something will be done next year.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS ON SPECIAL CLASSES AT VARIOUS COUNTRY SCHOOLS.

Darfield.—A start was made during the year with school classes in cookery and woodwork, the earliest classes commencing operations in June, and others followed during the months of July and August. Train arrangements suit admirably for pupils from schools on the main and branch line respectively beyond Darfield, and with a system of grouping these schools for instruction, classes were held successively on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings between the hours of 8 and 9.30 a.m. For those schools not served by train, but within a moderate cycling or driving distance, a class was held on Wednesday afternoons. The pupils of the last-mentioned class are deserving of all praise for the manner in which those most remotely removed from the centre travelled upwards of seven or eight miles each way to attend their respective classes. All classes were well attended, the number of pupils being sixty-four for cookery and seventy-five for woodwork. The classes in cookery were ably conducted by Miss E. M. Truman, of Christchurch Technical College, and the syllabus of work was based on lines of economy and attractiveness of dishes, combined with a judicious scientific correlation. In the woodwork classes drawing in isometric projections by each pupil preceded the practical work, which gave evidence of neat and methodical workmanship.

Towards the end of May wool-classing was taken up under the experienced and practical guidance of Mr. J. Riley. Farmers from a wide radius attended, and two classes, each comprising fourteen members, did useful and profitable work. The session concluded with shed-work, the shed being kindly provided by Mr. D. Mulholland.

Amberley.—School classes only have been held, the number of pupils being sixteen for cookery and home science, sixteen for dressmaking, and six for woodwork. In all classes the interest was well sustained and the attendance most satisfactory. Prizes for woodwork and cookery were awarded at the local show in May, the exhibit being well received. The thanks of the Committee are due to the Kowai County Council and the Amberley Town Board for contributions to the funds of the classes.

Southbridge.—The classes for dress cutting and making started in May, with Miss Vera McNie as instructress. The classes have been well attended, some twenty adults and about the same number of pupils from the district high school being present. At each lesson Miss McNie has proved an excellent instructress, being most careful and painstaking in her attention to each and every pupil, and at the same time exacting full application to the work in hand from each member of the class. The work has been carried on for two terms of thirteen weeks each, and there is every prospect of the same enthusiasm continuing in the future. The Committee have had to provide tables and trestles for the cutting and dressmaking, and have been very fortunate in being able to procure a suitable building at a low rent in which to hold the classes.

Leeston and Doyleston.—The dressmaking classes have been successfully carried on under the able instructorship of Miss L. M. Rennie, and a very high percentage of attendances has been maintained throughout the year. The classes were large, there being twenty pupils in the morning class and nineteen in the afternoon. The attempts which were made to start other classes did not prove successful, as it seemed impossible to create public interest in the matter. It is proposed to establish classes for manual instruction next year, using the Leeston School as a centre.

Dunsandel.—The technical classes in dressmaking and millinery have been a great boon to many of the young people of our district who are not in a position to attend such classes at any other centre. The interest and application on the part of the pupils was, I believe, keen and in every way satisfactory. The tuition of the instructress was greatly appreciated, and will be of great practical assistance to all the pupils. Under the circumstances of a small country district the classes met a felt need, and were as successful as could be expected. An increase of attendance is expected next term, so that it is hoped that the Board will see its way to continue the classes.