

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

The nineteenth year's course of instruction was a most successful one. Work was commenced in March, and continued throughout three terms of twelve weeks each, with one week's vacation between the terms. The attendance showed a decided increase on any previous year, the total number of individual students being 375—166 males and 209 females. Of these, thirty-two boys and thirty-three girls were free-place students—sixty holding junior free places and five senior free places. The percentage of attendance of all students for the year was 79·8. There were 187 students between the ages of thirteen and seventeen years, while 188 were over seventeen years of age.

Early in the session the Managers completed arrangements for establishing classes in agricultural chemistry and in magnetism and electricity. A laboratory was equipped, and a fair number of pupils availed themselves of the tuition offered. On account of the war an order for additional electrical apparatus was not fulfilled, and the work was somewhat hampered on this account. The Department expressed its willingness to recognize practical certificates for Public Service Senior Examinations secured by attendance at these classes.

A wool-sorting and wool-classing division did good work during the second and third terms. A theoretical and practical examination was held in December, and five students succeeded in qualifying for a first-year wool-classer's certificate. The attention of farmers and all contemplating an agricultural occupation is confidently directed to the facilities offered by the classes in agricultural chemistry and in wool-classing to secure technical education which would prove of inestimable value to them day by day. To learn nowadays solely by one's own practical experience is too slow and hazardous. A class for the study of elocution was also established. The instructress did good work, but the number of senior students who availed themselves of her services was not large. An improvement in this direction is anticipated for the 1916 session.

A series of University extension lectures on history and economics was very greatly appreciated by a large number of adult students. The Managers have arranged for classes next year to prepare students in these subjects for the Public Service Senior, Teachers' C certificates, and B.A. examinations.

In addition to the new classes referred to, instruction was availed of in the following: Painting, freehand drawing, general drawing, model-drawing (light and shade), cookery, dress-making, art needlework, plumbing (theoretical and practical), woodworking, typewriting, shorthand (Pitman's and Gregg's systems), book-keeping, Public Service subjects, English, and arithmetic. The typewriting and shorthand classes drew the largest roll numbers, and five new typewriters had to be purchased. Even then the supply of machines was hardly adequate. It might be mentioned that two disabled soldiers were keen students of the typewriting and shorthand class during the third term.

Arrangements are well advanced for the erection on the present site of a cookery-room and a laundry, consisting of two rooms—a washhouse and an ironing-room. The Department has notified the Managers that because of the existence of a cookery-room at the Masterton District High School it cannot undertake to assist in the erection of any similar facilities at the Technical School. Experience has shown that the District High School is too far removed from the centre of the town to render it suitable for night classes. Moreover, the Managers are of the opinion that their school should be self-contained, and they are desirous of securing for their institution all the facilities that a modern technical school affords. With the home-science section in working-order, the Managers will no doubt turn their attention to the desirability of equipping an engineering workshop.

The course in home science will include dressmaking, art needlework, cookery, and laundry-work. The newly appointed instructress will commence her duties at the reopening of the school for the 1916 session.

By effluxion of time the junior free places of twenty pupils lapsed on the 31st December, 1915. The Director reported upon the attendance, conduct, diligence, and progress of fifteen of them whose work he considered "thoroughly satisfactory." As a consequence the Department was pleased to grant these pupils senior free places entitling them to three years' additional free tuition from the 1st January, 1916. This is the first time that the school has sought to secure senior free places for its promising junior free pupils, but it is now intended to examine and report annually upon all pupils whose junior free places are about to lapse and who have proved themselves worthy of further free education.

The statement of receipts and expenditure shows the receipts from all sources to have amounted to £1,298 2s. 7d., of which the sum of £249 10s. 6d. was paid in fees by the students. £327 2s. 6d. in voluntary contributions, and £684 5s. 5d. in capitation and grants from the Government. Including a debit balance of £230 16s. 9d. brought forward from 1914, the disbursements amounted to £1,362 15s. 4d., thus leaving a debit balance of £64 12s. 9d. at the end of the year. Against this must be calculated capitation and subsidy on voluntary contributions due from the Department, so that the school really opened the new year with a credit balance.

Special acknowledgment is made of the financial assistance rendered to technical education by the Masterton Trust Lands Trust (£300) and the Masterton Borough Council (£25) during the 1915 session. Thanks also are due to the officers of the Department and to the Masterton Press for unfailing courtesy and valuable assistance on all occasions, and to the staff for the excellent services rendered throughout the year.

J. M. CORADINE, Chairman.
D. E. LESLIE, Director.