

follows: Commercial English—senior 55, junior 55; commercial arithmetic—senior 57, junior 56; book-keeping—senior 45, junior 44; shorthand—advanced 13, senior 14, junior 48; typing (four classes), 85; painting, 14; electricity, 10; wool-classing, 19; plumbing, 8; drawing, 24; dressmaking (three classes), 58; woodwork (two classes), 36; cookery (three classes), 59; millinery, 11; wood-carving, 4; building-construction, 7; Standard VI work, 7; sheep-shearing, 12: making a total of 741 class entries for all classes. The commercial and wool-classing classes carried on in connection with the high schools are not included in the above figures.

One hundred and forty free students joined the school during the year, eighty-nine junior and fifty-one senior. Considering all things, these students attended well, and there were very few who did not meet the requirements of the syllabus in that respect. So far it has not been found necessary to introduce the compulsory section of the Act in Timaru, as nearly all eligible pupils take up free places voluntarily, and it is to be hoped that this state of things will continue, because it is found in other places that compulsion brings in undesirable students. Year by year, however, the influences to distract young people's attention from their work seems to be on the increase. Last year also we suffered a good deal through the scarcity of adult labour: many of the lads working in warehouses had to go back to work in the evenings to assist with the stock-taking, &c.

The same definite courses of instruction were undertaken last year as have been carried out in previous years. The courses carried out were a domestic course, a trades course, a commercial course, and an art course. The domestic course, consisting of English, arithmetic, dressmaking, millinery, cookery and domestic economy, was very well attended, and it is gratifying to note that the interest in this course is increasing year by year, thus proving that we are providing something of practical value to the community. The commercial course, consisting of English, arithmetic, book-keeping, typewriting, shorthand and commercial correspondence, always brings out the largest number of students; this course provides the greatest attraction on account of the great number of openings nowadays for boys and girls in the commercial line. We have also always been very fortunate with regard to the teaching staff for these subjects. The interest taken in the course by the South Canterbury Chamber of Commerce and the South Canterbury Branch of the New Zealand Society of Accountants also gave a fillip to the work. These two associations presented a gold medal and a certificate as a first prize for the best student, a book and a certificate as a second prize, and a certificate as a third prize. Only third-year students were eligible to compete. A commercial course was also carried on for girls attending the High School. The trades course was only fairly well attended: this was largely due to the fact that many of the students are on active service. There was a substantial increase in the number of students attending the art course in both the elementary and the advanced classes, and some very fine work was done, the life class being particularly well patronized.

Two hundred and seven students took up work in one subject only or attended classes in unrelated subjects. These are mostly students who cannot find time to devote to a course of study. Plumbing, which has been a very successful class here for many years, shows marked signs that the supply of students is running out. Wool-classing was again a very popular class, and although it, like others, suffered somewhat, still there were sufficient students to form two good classes. The instructor continues to treat his subject in a businesslike manner, both from the commercial and the scientific standpoints, and year by year we have more and more direct evidence that the course of instruction given is proving of great value to the district. The Timaru Agricultural and Pastoral Association has a class for wool-classing on its schedule. This class was well patronized at last year's show, and a practical demonstration of the capabilities of the students was given. A class was again carried on for the benefit of boys attending the High School. About twenty boys attended this class, all of whom showed a keen interest in the work. Through the courtesy of the Christchurch Meat Company a class for sheep-shearing was again carried on at the Smithfield Works. To try and secure, if possible, a better supply of sheep the class was started three weeks earlier than in previous years, but the climatic conditions were unfavourable, and the supply of sheep offered so small that the number of students had to be restricted to twelve: even then the supply of sheep was barely sufficient for our needs. The students were all of an excellent type, and made rapid progress. Mr. Bernard Tripp, on behalf of the Sheep-owners' Union, examined the work of the students, and on his recommendation it was agreed to grant certificates of proficiency to the twelve. The Managers look on this class as one of the most important that it carries on, as the number of youths that are thus put on the road to become expert shearers must form a valuable asset to the farming community of the Dominion. Most of the students have gone out to sheds, where they have given a good account of themselves.

At the close of the session examinations were held in the different subjects taught at the school, and certificates were granted to successful candidates. On the whole the reports of the examiners were quite satisfactory. Twenty-three students sat for the Senior Free Place Examination, and they were all granted a pass by the Education Department. The Technical Inspector, Mr. E. C. Isaac, visited the school in September. He stayed for a week and saw all the different classes at work. His report on the working of the school is extremely favourable. Amongst other things he states that the whole of the class-rooms and workshops are in excellent order and condition, and that the order, discipline, and conduct of the school are most satisfactory.

In accordance with the Act, fourteen Managers were elected to represent the different contributing bodies to the funds of the association. During the year the Managers met eight times, and generally attended to all matters pertaining to the welfare of the school. Visiting committees were appointed each month, and these committees paid official visits to the classes whilst at work and reported thereon.