

Technical High School.—The 376 pupils in the Technical High School are divided among the various departments as follows: Commercial, 152; domestic science, 73; industrial, 115; agricultural, 36. Our staff has suffered a serious loss during the year through the resignation by Mrs. Gard'ner of the position of Lady Principal of the Girls' Hostel, which she has filled with such distinction from its inception. Mrs. Gard'ner has been succeeded by Miss Patterson, late Superintendent of Domestic Instruction for Derby, England.

We have again enlisted the assistance of the pupils themselves in carrying on the work of the school. Some three years ago a system of self-government was instituted, and under able school officers was then undoubtedly a great success. Last year it was felt desirable to suspend the system temporarily, but having revived it in a modified form during the present session we are able to look back upon the results obtained with every satisfaction.

The chief development that has taken place during this year has been in the electrical department. Considerable additions have been made to the equipment, and for the first time boys in the day school have been given an opportunity of doing electrical construction work. An innovation was made in the commercial and industrial departments in the direction of making special provision for those wishing to prepare for the Public Service Entrance Examination. This has been found desirable owing to the number of pupils, both on the commercial and on the industrial sides, who wish to look forward to Government appointments.

Evening School and Special Classes.—Our trade classes have necessarily suffered most severely by the war: in the carpentry and joinery department alone, of the students who have been in attendance during the last six years more than fifty are already on active service. A gratifying exception to the rule is formed by the engineering classes, which have shown an increase in almost every case, owing to the large number of young apprentices now in attendance. The typographical classes have well maintained their numbers, and are remarkable for the fact that they contain both young apprentices and older journeymen. It is a very unusual thing to find in any trade a considerable number of the latter who are wise enough to know that they can profit by further instruction, and it reflects great credit on students and instructor alike that this is not found to be the case among the compositors of Christchurch.

New classes have been formed for instruction in the principles of breadmaking and in the principles and practice of electric wiring, and each of these has thoroughly justified its existence, the former having a roll number of eighteen and the latter of forty.

A great improvement has taken place in the regularity of attendance, and this I believe may be taken as a proof of increased earnestness. Certainly the pluck and determination shown by very many of our students is sufficient evidence that we cannot do too much to help and encourage them in their efforts. But the conditions under which evening classes have to be carried on are such that the physical strain is in many cases too great, and it follows that the less fit and the less determined are deprived of the training of the school during the years when they need it most and can best profit by it. While the State insists that up to the period of adolescence every child must be under the ordered influences of school life, as soon as ever this stage is reached and its physical and mental development is undergoing the most momentous change in its life-history, it is left to the casual influences of the business or the street, which are generally far from helpful. This can only be remedied by insisting on the continuance of the training for at least a part of its working-hours up to seventeen or eighteen years of age, and on the provision of the instruction during the daytime when brain and body are not too tired to profit by it.

We are grateful for the growing recognition of the value of the work that is being done in the technical schools. The realization by the Education Department that the qualifications required for profiting to the full by the facilities which a technical school offers are not the same as those which rightly obtain for the ordinary secondary school removes an obstacle to the training of some deserving pupils, though the principle needs to be carried further than in the granting of free education to holders of certificates of competency who have shown special aptitude. The stamp of approval which has been placed on the work of the College by the Marine Department is particularly gratifying, and it is hoped that before long other Government Departments, and especially the Railway Department, will take similar action.

JOHN H. HOWELL, Director.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE ASHBURTON TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

The session opened in February with a small increase in roll numbers of the domestic science and trade classes and a large increase in the commercial classes. This increase was maintained throughout the year with the exception of the domestic classes, the roll numbers in this department at the end of the year being slightly less than at the end of 1915, which is accounted for by the fact that dressmaking and millinery classes were not started at Winchmore because of the insufficient number of students offering. The number of individual students attending technical classes this year is 427, against 429 for last year; and the roll number of the school for all classes is 1,665, as compared with 1,289, an increase of 376. This is very gratifying from the community's point of view, for it means that the students are taking a recognized course of subjects which will make them more proficient in their calling, and better able in the future to discharge their duties as citizens.

The details of the several departments are as follows: Commercial and general—Arithmetic (roll number 124), book-keeping (121), business methods (46), English (145), geography (25), history (14), physical culture (26), shorthand (Gregg) (35), shorthand (Pitman) (84), type-writing (199); domestic science—art needlework (14), cookery (80), dressmaking (252), home