

instruction in the evening classes. A very large proportion of the younger workers in Invercargill are engaged in offices, and so long as this is the case the commercial classes will attract large numbers of students, for the law of supply and demand operates in a vocational school as surely as it does in business. At the same time it is certain that many parents are attracted by the comparatively large starting wages offered for clerical work, and that many are inclined to regard an apprenticeship of five years, even in a skilled trade, as an imposition. Such persons, when choosing a career for their children, particularly for their boys, would do well to consider what it would offer them when they reach manhood.

With the increased roll number the shortage of class-room accommodation created some difficulty, but this was overcome for the year by holding the sewing classes in the assembly hall under the charge of two teachers. The removal of the No. 2 manual training cookery centre from the College affords an additional class-room for next year, but we have come to the point where the acquisition of additional ground and buildings must be regarded as necessary for the proper development of the school. The domestic science classes would benefit most by the provision of increased accommodation, as it has not been found possible to provide them with a full course of instruction in alundry-work and practical housewifery owing to lack of rooms.

On account of the considerable proportion of time given to practical work in all the courses, the school cannot specialize fully in the preparation of students for public examinations. However, two of the boys in the commercial class passed the Public Service Entrance Examination held in November, 1915. A slight modification of the examination syllabus by including the principles and practice of metal-work would permit boys in the trade class to enter on satisfactory conditions for the same examination. The very satisfactory total of seventy-nine Pitman's shorthand certificates was obtained in an examination held in November, 1915, including thirty-nine elementary, twenty theory, and twenty speed certificates, ranging from 60 to 100 words per minute.

The value of the work done in technical high schools is gradually gaining recognition. During the year a substantial concession has been granted by the Marine Department, which now allows a proportion of the time spent in the engineering course at approved technical high schools to count as part of the experience required for the third-class marine engineers' certificate. It is hoped that other Government Departments will follow suit, and that ultimately recognition will be given in the arbitration awards to apprentices who have received training in a technical high school prior to entering into employment. Presumably in the awards apprentices' wages and the duration of the apprenticeship are based on the assumption that the apprentice knows nothing of his trade when he enters it, so that different conditions should apply in the case of apprentices who have spent a year or more in the classes of a technical high school. It would surely not be too much to ask that apprentices trained in this way should receive higher starting wages and serve a shorter apprenticeship than those who take up their trade work without preliminary training.

An increased attendance has been recorded this year in the evening classes as well as in the Technical High School, for the war, far from diminishing the interest in technical education, has increased the demand for it to a marked degree. The enrolments during the year have been as follows: Free students, 154; paying students, 317: total, 471, an increase of 109. This marked increase has taken place despite the fact that there remains in the classes hardly a man of military age, the trade classes having suffered most in this respect. In regard to the different sections of work it is pleasing to note that the enrolments for instruction in general education, including art subjects among others, have never been greater. Though the art classes fell away somewhat last year, they have returned this year to their full numbers. In addition to the usual classes a class has been established this year in the applied arts section for sign and ticket writing. Nineteen students enrolled for instruction, and the work they displayed at the end of the session more than justified its establishment. Good enrolments and attendances were recorded in classes for English, arithmetic, and mathematics, and a class for advanced instruction in English was formed, whilst it was found possible to revive the French class. A considerable number of ex-students of the High School now enrol in the evening classes when they enter into employment, but there is no reason why more of them should not take advantage of the facilities afforded to them here for continuing their general education without cost to themselves. The domestic science classes have shown marked development, though undoubtedly there is not the demand for instruction in cookery that existed some years ago, owing to the attention that is now being given to this subject in primary schools. The classes in needlework, dress-making, and millinery have attracted students in large numbers, and the number of day classes for ladies has been increased to four weekly. The fact that Invercargill is essentially a commercial and not a manufacturing town is responsible for the enrolment of a large proportion of the students for commercial instruction, and again this year it has been found necessary to increase the number of shorthand and typewriting classes. There have also been good attendances in the book-keeping and correspondence classes. Classes for woodworking have not attracted students in large numbers at any time, and owing to the enlistment of a number of apprentices the roll numbers have been very low this year, though good work has been done by the individual students. The plumbing classes have suffered in the same way, but the standard of work done in them is indicated by the fact that in the last examination for plumbers' registration five candidates were successful in Invercargill, four of them being students of this school. The engineering classes have increased considerably in numbers, and the course of instruction has been modified to enable students to enter for the City and Guilds Examinations in mechanical engineering. An apprentice passing this examination in the first grade is entitled under the present Arbitration Court award to receive an additional 2s. 6d. per week for the last two years