

The links between the day school and the past and senior students and association have been considerably strengthened by an increase in our sports activities—cricket, football, and hockey. Teams composed partly of past and partly of present students have competed in the district competitions in each of these sports, and have been successful in winning their grade trophies.

In the background of all our work there has been a consciousness of the terrible events that are taking place in Europe, and as in previous years the school has tried to show in a practical manner its desire to help. The home-science department has been constantly active in assisting the Red Cross, and a large amount of unostentatious help has been rendered. Some of the girls have continued to show their sympathy with the orphans of British soldiers and sailors by making garments for them; but the main effort of the year has been directed towards supplying comforts to our old boys. For this purpose the girls, under the supervision of the mistresses, have made a large number of shirts, socks, mittens, balaclavas, &c., which have been forwarded, together with coffee, cocoa, milk, cigarettes, &c. Many of the boys, too, have given up their spare time to earn money by gardening or other work, and have handed over the whole of their receipts to the Parcels Fund.

Technical Evening School.—Though our evening and special classes show on the whole an increase, some departments have suffered severely. The numbers in our trade classes have declined from 773 to 663, partly on account of the withdrawal of students who are now on service, and partly no doubt as a result of the unsettlement caused by the approach of the time for service. Our home-science classes were attended only by 265, as compared with 342 in 1916. This decrease, I believe, is due to the large demands made by the war on the time of our womenfolk. There is so much to do in the way of Red Cross and other work that such personal matters as increasing one's proficiency in cookery, dressmaking, and millinery have had, by many, to be put aside.

The numbers in the typographical and in the various engineering classes have been well maintained, and some excellent work has been done, as is shown by the fact that every student who sat for the City and Guilds Examination in electrical engineering succeeded in passing; but there has been a lamentable falling-off in the plumbing and cabinetmaking classes that no war conditions can be held to explain. The explanation is, I think, rather to be sought in the present conditions of the trades.

The increased facilities which the Minister has given for free education in technical schools will help to remove the barrier that has prevented so many deserving and desirable pupils from benefiting by the means of self-improvement that are at hand. Very few students have so far presented themselves with endorsed competency certificates; but the step taken is altogether in the right direction, for it is a common experience in technical schools to find pupils who have been unable to secure proficiency certificates easily surpassing in a year or two many of those who have them. When it becomes generally known that free education in the industrial and home-science courses of evening schools is now offered to those who have left the public primary schools without passing the Sixth Standard, provided they are recommended by an Inspector of Schools, this privilege will no doubt be taken advantage of by many who have been handicapped in their early education.

When this institution was founded twelve years ago our ideas with regard to it were much too small, and we have suffered ever since from the inadequate provision made for growth. Matters became so acute that the Board was compelled to apply to the Government for a grant not only for the erection of additional rooms, but also for remodelling the cloak-room and lavatory arrangements. These extensions are being proceeded with, and the need for them has become more imperative than ever on account of the large increase that has taken place in our Technical High School in the 1918 session. Two additional class-rooms, together with an agricultural room and an art room, are being added to the south wing of the school, while cloak-room accommodation is being nearly doubled.

The Board has resolved to erect a hall and physical-training department as a memorial to the self-sacrifice of so many of its students, and it is hoped that, in addition to these, provision will be made for a centre which will serve as a rallying ground for our students' associations. We must recognize that the education of the class-room is after all only a part of the education which such an institution ought to offer, and that in addition to mental and physical training we should give opportunities for the development of those faculties that are of importance in civic and in social life. It is hoped that every one who has been connected with the school will do his part in making the memorial not unworthy of the devotion that its old students have shown.

JOHN H. HOWELL, Director.

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

The session opened in February with about the same enrolment as in the previous year, with an increase in commercial, art, and primary-school classes, and a decrease in domestic and trade classes. This decrease is the inevitable result of the great upheaval in trade and industrial circles caused by the war. The girls who formerly took the domestic course are now taking commercial courses, owing to the demand for girls in offices on account of shortage of young men. The decrease in the trade classes is due to a similar reason: as soon as our senior students attain the necessary age they offer themselves for military service.

The number of individual students who attended technical classes was 424, against 427 for the previous year. This is very satisfactory in face of the strenuous times through which we are now passing.

The details of the several departments are as follows: Domestic science—cookery (roll number 69); dressmaking (214); home nursing (24); home science (18); hygiene (7); millinery (125); commercial and general—accountancy (8); arithmetic (146); book-keeping (133); business