

the school opened five years ago the attendance has almost doubled, but only two additional class-rooms for general work have been made available during that time. The science laboratory, by reason of the number in attendance, has become much too small for our purpose, and next year it will be put to increased use for the domestic-science classes. The difficulties of carrying on the work of a large day school in buildings which were not designed for this purpose are very great, and they are accentuated by the lack of playground accommodation. Little can be done to improve the conditions in the present block of buildings, and it is sincerely hoped that steps will be taken in the near future to remove at least some of the classes to surroundings more suited to the work. Unfortunately, as the school is not endowed, but is dependent for its working-expenses on grants made by the Education Department, it is unable to do anything in the way of purchasing a site or erecting new buildings. There are enough students to fill a larger school, and all that is now needed is proper buildings and more grounds. Three years ago steps were taken in the direction of securing the site and buildings of the Boys' High School when it is vacated by the present occupants, but on the outbreak of war negotiations were suspended. However, each year's development makes it more evident that we must have larger buildings and playgrounds, and an early acquisition of the Boys' High School ever more desirable. On account of the large number of train students, and also on account of the buildings being used for evening classes, it is absolutely necessary to have the school in as central a position as possible.

In public examinations our students have had a successful session, and passes have been secured in the Public Service Entrance, Shorthand-Typists, Pitman's, and the City and Guilds of London Institute Examinations. The alteration in the examination syllabus to allow engineering students an opportunity of competing in the first-named examination has been appreciated. The demand for our students to fill positions has been very great throughout the year, and one of the engineering classes was nearly depleted of boys. It has been quite impossible to find enough boys or girls to satisfy the wants of banks and commercial houses, and it is satisfactory to note that in almost all cases higher starting-wages than usual were given in recognition of their special college training. The work done in the cadet company has been of a high standard as usual.

It has been evident for some years past that boarding-hostels for boys as well as for girls would soon be necessary, since many students attend the school from the most distant parts of Southland, whilst others live in districts not well served by trains and either board or should board in town. In the third term a suitable house with large grounds was leased and opened as a boys' hostel, and it is hoped that in consequence many people living in the country will not hesitate now to board their boys and so give them the full benefit of their course of instruction in the school.

The number of old boys on active service has increased steadily, and three of them have laid down their lives for the cause.

Numerous friends have assisted during the year, notably by giving prizes for proficiency in class-work and for athletics, and in this connection thanks are due to Mr. H. E. Niven, Mr. A. L. Wyllie, Mr. J. Gilkison, Mr. F. S. Loughlan, the Society of Accountants, the Town Council Athenæum Committee, Mr. John Fisher, Mr. A. Peterson, Miss M. Wilson, Miss I. Gunn, Miss M. Wake, Mr. S. G. Macfarlane, Mr. T. G. Malcolm, Mr. William Grieve, Mr. J. R. Baillie, Mr. J. W. Dickson, Mr. J. Miller, Mrs. Templeton, and others. The school is also indebted to many firms and private persons for permitting students to visit their works and farms, and to the Press for its willing assistance at all times. Thanks are due to the members of the teaching staff for their hearty co-operation in school and out in advancing the interests of the school.

*Evening Classes.*—The attendance at the classes was somewhat greater than in 1916, the number of students enrolled being as follows: Junior free students, 93; senior free students, 84; discharged soldiers, 21; paying students, 335: total, 533, as compared with 471 for 1916. During the year twenty-one returned soldiers enrolled for instruction, five of them for a full course necessitating their attendance during the day as well as on several evenings each week. The attendance of these men for a full course was rendered possible by their being in receipt of a special allowance paid to returned soldiers who take a course of instruction to fit them for a new occupation, and though the scheme was in operation for only four months last year it showed promise of giving good results. Four of the men took an engineering course, and one of them has since found employment as a motor mechanic. The fifth, who took a commercial and general course, has been appointed as a teacher in a country school. The possibilities of technical schools in the matter of training returned men for skilled work seem, however, to be unknown to the various associations and individuals who are urging upon the Government the necessity for building special-training workshops. The demand for higher general education increased considerably, and a full course for Matriculation, including Latin, French, English, mathematics, and drawing, has been well established. One student passed the Public Service Entrance Examination, two the full Matriculation Examination, and one the final section of this examination in 1917. Increased attention was given to the preparation of students for Standards V and VI certificates, with the result that ten qualified for the former and two for the latter during the year. The classes for pure and applied art were again well attended, and the same applies to the classes in domestic science and commercial subjects. The number of classes in book-keeping was increased during the year, and it is hoped that a proportion of the abler students will pursue their work in these classes sufficiently far to qualify for the book-keeper's certificate of the New Zealand University. The typewriting-room is now in use five evenings weekly, and the number of passes secured during the year in the examination for shorthand-typists is a tribute to the work done by the teachers of shorthand and typewriting. The accommodation for instruction in dressmaking, needlework, millinery, cookery, and hygiene is being enlarged and much improved.