

A and B are large schools with full classes, whilst C is a small school where there are not sufficient girls to form a separate class.

(1) This includes elocution, not given at other schools.

(2) Pupils wishing to take French (three hours) do so at the expense of needlecraft.

(3) Short courses in laundry, furnishing, first aid, &c., are given, so that it is not very easy to estimate exact hours given these subjects.

The syllabuses used for these various courses have hitherto been prescribed by each school. In 1926 it was decided to add (a) housecraft and (b) needlework and dressmaking to the subjects for Intermediate, Public Service Entrance, and Senior National Scholarships Examinations. Fresh syllabuses were accordingly prepared for these subjects, and are being used as a basis on which to build the detailed schemes of work which each school requires to suit its own particular needs.

Buildings and Equipment.—The older buildings are, generally speaking, but poorly equipped. A large number of ranges, now no longer fully serviceable, should be replaced. The gas companies have been very generous, in some cases giving and in others quoting special terms for new stoves of an up-to-date pattern and greatly improved construction. The Department has thus been able to improve the equipment at a low cost where gas is available. In a similar manner the Electric-power Boards have assisted the various controlling authorities, and many centres are now equipped with electrical cookers.

The different Boards, in some cases by the aid of special grants from the Department, are endeavouring to improve and increase the smaller equipment. The quality of the equipment supplied is, however, frequently found to be poor and unsuitable. As the expenditure of the money is in the hands of the Boards, the Department has little opportunity to advise in this matter before the equipment is purchased.

III. TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

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In consequence of my absence from New Zealand during the greater part of 1926, I am not in a position to report at length on the conditions of technical education in the Dominion during that year.

During my stay in England I was able to investigate a good many educational problems, and to visit schools and institutions of very varied aims and types. I was also able to interview employers of labour, chiefly in the engineering and instrument-making trades, and to find out to some extent what views were held as to the kind and amount of education considered desirable for apprentices, operatives, foremen and overseers, and executive officers. The times were hardly propitious for taking stock of a form of education which necessarily makes heavy demands for expenditure on buildings, special rooms, and apparatus and appliances, for the country was in the grip of industrial strife during the whole period of my stay, and this following on some years of acute trade depression, naturally had had its effect on all educational and on almost all industrial activities.

Though, however, for the time being, any great increase in expenditure for the purposes of technical education cannot be made, yet the problem of the right education of the adolescent boy and girl, of whatever social grade and for whatever niche in the organization of the country he or she is destined ultimately to fill, is being grappled as never before. The very valuable report of the consultative committee set up to consider the education of the adolescent (commonly known as the Hadow report), which necessarily deals with conditions and complexities of industrial organization and social structure not altogether paralleled by the conditions in New Zealand, could nevertheless be studied with advantage by every person interested in the education of the young in this country.

The main principle which emerges from that report seems to be that, though post-primary education for every child up to the age of at least fifteen years is a vital necessity if British democracy, now at the parting of the ways, is to progress, such post-primary education facilities as are provided must be on the very broadest possible lines, and must make the fullest use of the child's environment, his special aptitudes, and his constructive no less than his reflective abilities. All avenues of culture must be explored—of the hand and the heart as well as of the head.

With more particular reference to the present conditions of technical education in Great Britain, the most notable tendency is the revival of interest in technical-school work of associations of employers and of workers, and for this revival to be the result of pressure not so much from the employers and industry from above as from the individual below.

A recent inquiry shows that in one way or another not less than 4,400 firms in England and Wales now support attendance at technical schools, and that not less than 68,000 young persons come under arrangements for encouraging it. These range from such active measures as taking part in "sandwich" schemes, under which the young person is alternately full time at school and full time in the works, or allowing time off each week for attendance at school during working-hours, to comparatively passive arrangements for the consideration of periodical reports upon the progress of the individual employees who attend evening classes. The particulars collected in the schools show that 57 firms (including 37 engineering, 6 shipbuilding, and 4 vehicle and rail-carriage building) take part in "sandwich" schemes, and 1,756 (including 438 engineering, 328 printing, 277 building trades and plumbing, and 58 vehicle and rail-carriage building) grant time off during ordinary working-hours. In some occupations the tradition that the youth who wants to make his own way to a position of responsibility must begin by going to the technical school is so well established as to make the intervention of the employer or manager quite unnecessary.

Joint Industrial Councils have been established for many industries—notably those for flour-milling; heating and ventilating; engineering; pottery, printing, and silk—and these give consideration to the interests, educational and otherwise, of young workers.