

Apart from the teachers on the staffs of day technical schools, there were in the service of the several Education Boards 118 classified instructors in manual training subjects—fifty-nine for wood-work or metal-work and fifty-nine for domestic subjects. Serving under Technical School Boards there were seventeen instructors in woodwork or metal-work, and sixteen in domestic subjects, who devoted part of their time to manual and part to technical classes. There were, in addition, five local part-time instructors in woodwork and three in cookery.

The staffing for domestic subjects, and indeed for all practical subjects, is still inadequate. Even in the technical schools and high schools the classes are too large and the work suffers, and must suffer until a more generous scale of staffing for practical work can be adopted. In addition to the need for more instructors, there is also great need, especially in connection with domestic subjects, for additional organizing teachers, supervisors, and inspectors.

The supply of teachers for subjects of domestic economy is still insufficient to meet the demand, and several teachers have been appointed who are not as highly qualified as is desirable. During 1927 the staffing for home science was increased by three in the technical schools and manual-training centres and by four in the high schools. In the home-science work the preponderance of young teachers of comparatively low grading is still great, but is more marked in the high-school lists than in those of the technical branch. An increasing percentage of the home-science teachers have received their training in the Home Science School of the Otago University, from which they enter the service with the degree or the diploma in home science. At present about three teachers with the degree, and nine with the diploma, are turned out annually from the Otago School, the supply being equal to the demand.

The occurrence of vacancies in the ranks of the men teachers, especially in the manual-training centres, is much more rare. For the filling of these, and of new positions created from time to time as the volume of the work expands, the Education Boards have perforce to rely for the most part on securing skilled tradesmen without previous teaching experience, and there is seldom any difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of applications to enable a suitable selection to be made. In most cases the teachers so appointed already have good qualifications with regard to trade experience, and in addition they usually possess such evidence of their general knowledge of principles and practice as is afforded by certificates awarded on the results of examinations conducted by the City and Guilds of London Institute or some similar body. In some cases it is possible to give such new entrants a kind of apprenticeship by way of service as assistants to experienced teachers in those centres which are large enough to accommodate either double or abnormally large classes, and this preliminary training is found to be invaluable.

Some of the younger handicraft teachers, and, indeed, some of the older ones as well, are seeking to improve their qualifications by studying for the handicraft teachers' certificate or for one of the ordinary teachers' certificates, and in 1927 the first handicraft certificate was awarded the candidate having passed each of the three annual sectional examinations.

The number of student teachers at manual-training centres has diminished. On the woodwork and metal-work side there are none now in training, and the number of those serving under teachers of domestic subjects is only two. Generally speaking, the student teachership system is not satisfactory. As far as the young men are concerned, it is not possible both to serve as a student teacher and to pass through an ordinary apprenticeship, whereas, under the conditions prevailing in the country, it is practically indispensable to their success as teachers that they shall have had the benefit of good trade experience; with respect to the young women, a student teachership cannot be regarded as affording a sufficient training for a full position, but rather as a means of gaining such an insight into the work of teaching as will stand them in good stead as an introduction to the complete course of study at the Otago School of Home Science. The establishment of teachers' handicraft examinations and certificates for teachers of domestic subjects would provide an alternative to the University course in home science for young women who wished definitely to specialize in the work of the manual-training centres. In such cases, however, as in the corresponding case of the woodwork instructor, the trainee should have some trade experience before taking up full-time employment, especially if she were intending to specialize on the needlework, dressmaking, and millinery side.

BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT.

Necessary additions and extensions due to growth of the technical schools were made in the more urgent cases. In general, buildings and equipment have been maintained in good order and condition, though in certain cases, one or two due to the transfer of buildings from the care of one body to that of another, necessary repairs were not carried out promptly, and not sufficient attention was paid to keeping the grounds in good order and the buildings well painted and clean.

Grants authorized in 1927 for new technical-school buildings, additions, &c., totalled about £23,600, including new class-rooms in the Auckland Technical School hall extensions, towards which local contributions with Government subsidies, &c., amounted to nearly £9,000; a new wing of five rooms at Hamilton Technical School; a new room at Hawera Technical School; two new rooms at Wanganui Technical School; a new workshop building at Palmerston North; additional grant for new workshops at the Napier Technical School; and the purchase of additions to site at Dunedin Technical School.

Equipment has been for the most part maintained at the standard of previous years. This standard is undoubtedly low in some departments of the work, but in others, where it might be expected that greater facilities for practical work would be welcomed by the teachers, even the moderate amount of equipment provided is not fully utilized.

Grants authorized for equipment totalled about £4,200, mainly for additions to the equipment of existing laboratories and workshops.