

Courses hitherto in use in technical high schools have in general been designed to develop precisely these qualities, and present conditions demand that these qualities should be developed to an even higher degree and that curricula should be modified constantly towards this end.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

In technical high schools and combined schools there are two distinct types of courses in which agriculture has a place: the University Entrance course, including agriculture as the science subject, and the agricultural course in which the time usually spent on a foreign language and mathematics is available for a more extensive study of agriculture.

The first type of course is gradually disappearing. It was essentially a compromise between the particular demands of the long-course pupil who desired to matriculate and the needs of the short-course pupil who would find work on the land or in an associated calling. So far as the teaching of agriculture is concerned, its weakness lies in the fact that the prescription set by the University authorities is necessarily limited in scope, and does not reflect the most characteristic features of New Zealand agriculture. Hence such a course is of limited value to those whose formal agricultural education ceases at the post-primary stage. Nor is it of much value to those students who desire to continue their education at the University standard; for it has been attacked by those in the best position to appreciate its use for such a purpose—the Professors of the University Colleges of Agriculture. Students who go forward to the colleges with such a training find difficulty in mastering those general and technical subjects that require a preliminary sound knowledge of chemistry and biology.

At the same time there has been considerable development of the second type of course, designed to cover two or more years. Particularly in technical high schools this course has become very varied in type, according to the special nature of the agriculture of the district and to the facilities existing in the school. Thus a school with a considerable area of land attached can offer a very practical course in field and animal husbandry, while large town or city schools offer a rural industrial course, with instruction in farm mechanics, together with such observational work on nearby farms as can be arranged.

The provision of a school farm as an adjunct to an agricultural course of this second type must still be regarded as an experiment, with many evident difficulties. Where the school is entirely or predominantly an agricultural one there is every prospect that an attached farm would be fully utilized and successfully managed. But where this is not the case, the amount of actual work involved and the heavy burden of management create conditions that make success extremely problematical, whether we consider the effective use of the farm as a unit in the equipment of the course or the economical handling of the land and the stock.

During and at the end of the year 1933, 5,020 boys left secondary, technical, and combined schools, and of these, 937, or about 19 per cent., went farming. During the same year slightly less than 9 per cent. of all boys attending these schools took an agricultural course. Boys leaving primary schools at the end of 1933 numbered 11,337, and of these, 2,678, or 24 per cent., engaged immediately in agricultural or pastoral pursuits. For these, agricultural education, so far as this Department is concerned, in general ends at the primary stage. Comparable figures for the secondary departments of district high schools are not available, but 39 per cent. of the leavers go to the land.

It would thus appear that there is scope for further development of agricultural courses of the second type. The provisions of the Free Place Regulations ensure that such a course shall not become wholly vocational, but that adequate attention shall be paid to those subjects that are generally regarded as cultural, and the basis of all education.

TECHNICAL CLASSES.

During 1934 evening and part-time day technical classes were conducted in thirty-nine centres, as against thirty-seven in 1933. The total number of students in these classes was 9,597, of whom 5,616 held junior or senior free places and 3,981 paid fees. The numbers show an increase of 512 free and 7 paying pupils.

STUDENTS IN TECHNICAL CLASSES: NUMBERS ATTENDING FROM CERTAIN GROUPS OF OCCUPATIONS.

Year.	Commercial, &c.					Engineering and Building.						Total, Industrial and Commercial.	Professional.
	Clerical.	Shop and Warehouse.	Dressmaking, Millinery, Tailors, and Tailoresses, &c.	Printers, &c.	Total.	Engineers and Mechanics.	Electricians.	Plumbers and Metal-workers.	Woodworkers.	Painters and Plasterers, &c.	Total.		
1928 ..	2,253	1,090	154	175	3,672	912	375	740	825	218	3,070	6,742	650
1929 ..	2,303	1,165	194	131	3,793	885	302	826	762	246	3,021	6,814	625
1930 ..	2,456	1,249	193	154	4,052	1,180	331	774	919	287	3,491	7,543	614
1931 ..	2,151	1,162	140	181	3,634	1,054	257	584	659	190	2,744	6,378	458
1932 ..	1,920	1,085	161	138	3,304	790	256	450	454	146	2,096	5,400	300
1933 ..	1,967	1,160	143	157	3,427	682	181	382	293	97	1,635	5,062	302
1934 ..	2,357	1,248	141	134	3,880	722	217	357	322	61	1,679	5,559	339

NOTE.—The 1928 and 1929 figures show roll at the 30th June in each year. From 1930 the figures show the roll at 1st July.