

demand for instruction in this subject continue it will be necessary to appoint a third teacher of short-hand. The speed section did good work, and certificates to be issued this year indicate that the rate varied from 50 to 130 words per minute. On the other hand, the classes for book-keeping were not so well attended as in former years, the falling-off being greater in the senior division than in the junior. This is to be regretted, for, though the standard of the senior class is high, students having once entered on the study of the subject should not be satisfied till they have qualified for a first-class certificate in the upper division. Numerically the class for commercial law was small, but the students were of more than ordinary ability. It is intended to next year recast the syllabus of work of this class so as to bring the course of instruction in law more into accord with the requirements of students engaged in mercantile pursuits. The class for penmanship and commercial correspondence was well attended, students evinced greater interest in their work, and the examiners report that they are very favourably impressed with the style of penmanship taught by the present teacher.

The classes for technical subjects under the regulations were 19 in number, and comprised the following subjects: Chemistry, botany (two classes), physics, practical electricity (two classes), mechanical engineering, principles of sanitary plumbing, practical plumbing, carpentry and joinery (two classes), wood-carving, wool-classing, tailors' cutting and fitting, dressmaking (two classes), cookery (three classes). It is to be regretted that the majority of the students of the chemistry class do not attempt to follow the subject beyond the elementary stage. To the best student in this class Professor Black grants free tuition in his class at the University. In the autumn, in addition to the usual botany class, a special class suited to the requirements of teachers was established. The class was attended by sixteen teachers, several of whom at the end of the term expressed the hope that the class would be continued next year. Considering the importance of the physics, I cannot but express disappointment at the paucity of the attendance at the class. Evidently a large body of apprentices still fail to recognise the important bearing this subject has upon many of the trades. Professor Shand again offers free tuition in his University class to the association's best student in physics. In marked contrast to the attendance at physics was the number of students who applied for admission to the class established for instruction in practical electricity. Eighty-eight students were enrolled within a week, while large numbers were for various reasons refused admission, and many of those who were admitted had no idea of the nature and scope of the work they were entering upon. The result was that about half the number who attended regularly during the first term failed to enrol for the second term now going on. Mechanical engineering was again well attended, and students invariably devoted themselves earnestly to their work. This class is being gradually furnished and equipped with the models and appliances necessary for the illustration of the principles of the work, and the class evidently continues to be very popular with students. The class for practical plumbing was this year attended by more students than could be conveniently accommodated at one time, and the teacher overcame the difficulty by giving extra lessons to those able to attend on a different evening. I have repeatedly directed attention to the quality of the work done in our plumbing classes, and I am therefore pleased to call attention to the fact that one of the students, after two years' preparation in our plumbing classes, visited London, and after some months' attendance at the Polytechnic plumbing classes, sat for the City and Guilds Examination, gaining second-class honours in principles of plumbing, and first-class honours in plumbers' work, ordinary grade; he also gained a silver medal and three book prizes.

Although the tailoring class was not large, the students showed great interest in their work, and their attendance was both regular and continuous, and the efforts of the teacher are evidently greatly appreciated. Towards the end of the term the attendance at the class for wool-sorting fell away, and evidence of increased attendance will be required to justify room being made for it next year. Two classes for dressmaking were held, and these were both well attended. The sewing-machine provided greatly facilitated the work, while the adoption of the "Fr'sco system" of cutting out also proved a decided advantage, students tending to become more reliant upon their own efforts and judgment and less dependent upon the teacher. Further, it is considered that after their withdrawal from the class students taking the system are more likely to attempt the cutting-out and making required for their own use. The examiner reports that the finish of the work in dressmaking this year, as compared with previous years, reflects great credit on the teacher. The attendance at the three cookery classes was up to the average of former years, but only a few of the students sat for the final examination.

Looking back on the year's operations, I have to express the opinion that so far as the actual working of the classes is concerned, the staff attained all that may reasonably be expected or even desired, but it is a matter for regret that so few of our students continue their attendance long enough to receive the full benefit of the education and training that has been placed within their reach.

On the coming into force of the technical-scholarship regulations, 121 pupils were allowed to join classes without payment of fees. Several of these attended only once or twice, while at least a third of the number failed to make the minimum attendances required to entitle the association to the capitation grant. The scholarship-holders were, however, of more than average ability and power of application, the explanation probably being that the majority of them, having just recently passed through public schools, retained a good knowledge of the fundamental principles of the work. This confirms the view made public by me in previous reports that were pupils to enter our school immediately on their withdrawal from the day school much greater benefit would be derived than is usually the case when entrance is postponed, as at present, till much has been forgotten. With the exception of those for tailoring, wool-sorting, wood-carving, and practical electricity, all the classes were examined. To the honorary examiners the thanks of the association are again due. Most of them have, year after year, given considerable time and care to the examination of the work. The members of the staff have worked in harmony, consulted students' interests, and rendered me every assistance. They are therefore entitled to most of the credit for the success attained.

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Secretary and Superintendent.