

Dominion. Of the total number of boys in attendance, 590, or 53 per cent., received industrial training, for the most part in mechanical and electrical engineering and allied trades. 1,304 boys and girls took commercial subjects, and began a course of instruction which in two or three years enables them to fill creditably junior positions in offices. That satisfaction is given appears to be shown in the increasing demand by business men for the services of young persons who have received a preliminary business training in a technical high school.

The number of pupils taking up the various courses provided was as follows :—

Course.	Number of Pupils.		Totals.
	Boys.	Girls.	
Industrial	590	..	590
Commercial and general	360	944	1,304
Domestic	..	291	291
Agriculture	158	..	158
Art	2	2	4
Totals	1,110	1,237	2,347

Over 55 per cent. of the pupils took commercial and general courses, and domestic courses were taken by 23·5 per cent. of the girls. There was an increase of thirty-five in the number of pupils taking agriculture. Seven of the schools offered industrial, commercial, and domestic courses; five of these offered also an agricultural course; while one school (Westport) offered an industrial (engineering) course only. There are indications of a demand for an increase in the schools of the latter type.

NUMBER OF PUPILS RECEIVING FREE EDUCATION AT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS UNDER THE REGULATIONS FOR FREE PLACES.

		1916.			1917.		
		Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Junior free pupils	First year ..	518	577	1,095	595	627	1,222
	Second year ..	280	320	600	311	378	689
Senior free pupils	First year ..	70	109	179	82	115	197
	Second year ..	11	28	39	19	18	37
	Third year ..	..	2	2	1	4	5
		879	1,036	1,915	1,008	1,142	2,150

Of the total number of pupils in attendance, 91·6 per cent. were receiving free education under the Regulations for Free Places. Junior free places were held by 1,911 pupils, an increase of 216, and senior free places by 239 pupils, an increase of 19. It is a matter for regret that so large a percentage of those who hold a junior free place continue at the school for only one year. The demand at the present time, brought about by war conditions, for the services of young persons is no doubt largely responsible for the decrease in the number of pupils holding second-year free places, but it is feared that the principal cause may be found in the economic conditions which make it necessary for the boys and girls to contribute to home expenses, as in many instances parents are not in the position to sacrifice the present earning-power of their children, much as they may desire to give them the full advantages of a good education.

Capitation amounting to £28,119 was earned in respect of 2,303 pupils, of whom 2,103 were free pupils, as compared with £23,295 in 1916 in respect of 2,029 pupils. The average amounts of capitation earnings were £12·34 in the case of free pupils who qualified for capitation, and £7·1 in the case of other pupils. The average amounts for the previous year were £11·93 and £6·97 respectively.

FINANCIAL.

The total capitation earnings of all classes, including technical high schools, was approximately £61,868 (as compared with £58,066 for the previous year), of which £26,729 was earned by classes conducted by Education Boards; £32,064 by classes conducted by Technical School Boards and Managers, and £3,075 by classes conducted by University Colleges and High School Boards.