

It is to be noted, as a sign of recovery from war conditions, that whereas in 1917 the females attending classes outnumbered the males by over a thousand, and in 1918 by some four hundred and fifty, in 1919 the males outnumber the females by about three hundred and fifty. The number of students engaged in agriculture and trades and industries is approximately one-third of the total.

The total number of classes held shows an increase over that for 1918, though in some subjects there is a slight falling-off.

The engineering classes have more than recovered the drop in number reported last year, the total number being fourteen in excess of that for 1917. In almost all cases these classes have been conducted with vigour and success.

There is again a slight decrease in the number of classes in agricultural subjects, but there has been no diminution of interest in the instruction, and in certain cases notable work has been done in short courses for farmers, conducted with the co-operation of the Department of Agriculture. In general, however, the instruction has been mainly directed towards the more scientific aspects of agriculture, and not so much towards purely vocational training.

An increase has again to be recorded in the number of classes in subjects related to the home. The principal object of the training provided in these subjects is that of equipping the girl-student for her future duties in her own home.

The more professional course of the School of Domestic Science in Otago University, designed mainly with the object of providing specially qualified teachers of domestic science for the technical schools, girls' high schools, and manual-training centres, continues to grow in popularity. The number of students in attendance during the year at this special course was sixty-three, of whom forty-three were holders of Government bursaries, and may be regarded as prospective teachers of domestic subjects. Seven degree and nine diploma students completed their course during 1919, and were immediately offered good positions. Payments totalling £2,766 were made in respect of forty-three bursars, an average of about £64 per bursar.

The difficulties in the way of providing skilled instructors in the various branches of technical work have not markedly diminished in recent years, and in 1919, particularly, the demand of industry for competent men has been a serious obstacle in the way of securing the best teachers for the schools. This competition has been largely responsible for the increase of £22,664 in the payments made on account of staff salaries, an increase of more than 38 per cent. on the staff salaries paid in the previous year.

An additional difficulty lies in the fact that the number of skilled tradesmen who have also been trained as teachers is very small in every branch of industry. In the larger schools some valuable work has been done in the direction of training young people in various trades with a view to their subsequent appointment as teachers. The efforts made in this direction are worthy of every encouragement, since the success of the whole system of technical instruction depends as much on the skill, knowledge, and enthusiasm of the teachers as on the industry and capacity of the students.

In this connection it is hoped that regulations recently issued providing for the appointment of student teachers in technical classes in certain approved conditions will help towards the solution of a very pressing and difficult question.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS RECEIVING FREE EDUCATION UNDER THE REGULATIONS FOR FREE PLACES.

			1918.			1919.		
			Males.	Females.	Totals.	Males.	Females.	Totals.
Junior free pupils	First year	..	854	695	1,549	982	739	1,721
	Second year	..	522	409	931	543	463	1,006
Senior free pupils	First year	..	422	396	818	424	461	885
	Second year	..	276	314	590	253	323	576
	Third year	..	135	188	323	124	176	300
Totals			2,209	2,002	4,211	2,326	2,162	4,488