

in the ordinary course of their technical studies. Indeed, the association, by the complete course which it offers in these subjects, as well as in arithmetic and penmanship, is doing much towards forming, in a direction not always recognised, a proper basis for technical education. Examiners and teachers of the classes popularly known as technical classes frequently refer to the insufficient and incomplete knowledge of the above-mentioned subjects possessed by students, and the consequent effect upon their progress. As an instance of this, the following is taken from the report on the work of the class for mechanical engineering: "The need of a preliminary class in junior English is, in some cases, painfully evident among the junior students. Several of these are unable to clearly state what they know, and this through mere inability to properly express themselves." Notwithstanding the crowded state of the English classes, the work seems to have been quite up to the standard of former years. The examiner of senior English writes, "There is evidence of sound training in general principles and along broad educative lines." Of the intermediate class the examiner says, "Many of the pupils of this class may be characterized as experts in the work professed"; while the examiner of the junior classes states, "The composition of these classes is excellent, and forms a special feature of the work."

With the view of conserving students' energies and directing their work in mathematics directly along the lines suited to their actual requirements, classes in practical mathematics were this year established and were, for a time, well attended. During the second quarter, however, the attendance fell off considerably. The experience with this class seems to support the statement that "the easier you make the work the less will the student appreciate the assistance thus rendered, and the more will he relax his own efforts"; and, after all, it is not the actual knowledge, but the training, that is of value, and should be the aim of our work.

The classes for Latin and for French were each subdivided and taught in sections. This entailed more time on the part of the teachers, but the results were such as to convince one of the necessity of subdividing the English classes as soon as rooms are available to accommodate the extra classes thus formed. The work of the other continuation classes does not call for any special remark.

*Commercial Classes.*—These have always been well attended, and this year all these classes, except that for commercial law, show marked increases. The consistent support accorded these classes seems to me to arise from the fact that most of the subjects of instruction of this group are such that the ability of the student can be noted, and progress more or less directly followed. Thus a diligent student of, say, shorthand, typing, or book-keeping soon gives evidence of increased ability and efficiency to an extent likely to attract an employer's attention, and thus such a student is sure, before long, to get some direct return for his labour of study. In previous years there has invariably been a tendency on the part of students to confine their attention too exclusively to one particular subject of the group, and to disregard the assistance likely to be rendered by a study of the kindred or complementary subjects. This year, however, there was an evident desire to take advantage of the instruction in auxiliary subjects, and about seventy students took what may be termed a full commercial course. Arithmetic was this year treated on more practical lines than hitherto, and the result was in every way satisfactory. The classes for book-keeping were crowded, but among those who entered the junior division were some who would have been more profitably employed in attendance at arithmetic and penmanship. The value of the work done in the senior division of the class is becoming known and valued by commercial men. For shorthand 144 students entered, and although many of these did good work, there remained a number who never got over the initial difficulties of the subject. In order to accommodate all those desirous of learning typing a few machines were borrowed, and an extra class started. The number of students who enrolled for penmanship and commercial correspondence was sufficient to have formed at least two classes, but there being no room available, a rather large and unwieldy class remained. However, here, as in English, notwithstanding the large class, the results of the examination by outside examiners show that creditable work has been done. "Taking into account the large number in the class and the insufficient accommodation," say the examiners, "we consider the results attained afford adequate evidence that the instructor has carried on the work with much ability and enthusiasm."

*Technical Classes.*—The classes for science come first in order, but do not call for lengthened remark. The chemistry class was, as usual, of a convenient and satisfactory size, most of the students being either chemists' assistants or students with a leaning towards pharmacy. The usual botany class is not being held during the spring session, but an effort will be made to form a beginners' class about the middle of January. The Saturday classes in the same subject, undertaken to meet the requirements of teachers, are well attended. The class for elementary physics was also a very satisfactory one, and it is worthy of note that telegraph operators formed a majority of the members of the class.

Owing probably to repeated change of teachers, the class for practical electricity was numerically weak, and did not justify the heavy outlay incurred for rent. In mechanical engineering the teacher has as many students as he could conveniently deal with, but among these was great disparity, both in ability and attainments. Into this class men engaged only at engineering work or at an allied trade or profession are admitted, but many of these youths are so anxious to reach engineering proper that they enter the class direct, shunning, as it were, the indispensable course in drawing and mathematics; then, either their study is protracted or the result is a failure. In plumbing, too, the apprentices evince a disposition to avoid the theory class involving drawing and calculation, and to combat this tendency I purpose next year so arranging the courses that attendance at the theory classes will become obligatory on the part of all plumbers taking the practical course. The class for painters' work was this year revived, and attended by sixteen apprentices. The fees of several of the boys of this class were paid by their employers, and this, to my mind, is evidence of acknowledgment of the benefit of increased ability and efficiency likely to follow attendance at the classes.