

Of the total number of students admitted to free places, 2,794, or 86 per cent., qualified for capitation.

The courses of instruction taken up by students who so qualified were as follows:—

	Courses of Instruction.					Number of Students.	
						1909.	1910.
Science and technology .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	649	736
Pure and applied art .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	152	197
Domestic economy .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	319	422
Agriculture .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	21	42
Commercial instruction .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	1,066	1,397
Totals .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	<u>2,207</u>	<u>2,794</u>

Capitation payments on account of free places amounted for 1910 to £8,066 19s. 9d., being at the rate of £2 9s. per free place.

It will be seen that about 50 per cent. of the free pupils under instruction during the year elected to take commercial courses in preference to other courses of instruction. The fact that a large proportion of the students holding free places are resident in or near the larger centres probably accounts to some extent for what appears to be at first sight an undue proportion.

It is gratifying to note a gradual increase in the number of free pupils taking a course of agricultural instruction. In 1908 the number was seven, rising to forty-two in 1910.

Day technical schools consisting of organized classes providing one or more courses of not less than twenty hours a week were in operation during the year in connection with the technical schools at Auckland, Wanganui, Napier, Nelson, Westport, Christchurch, and Dunedin. These schools, which continue to be well attended, provide fairly full courses in science and technology, pure and applied art, domestic economy, agriculture and commercial instruction for pupils who on leaving the primary schools probably would not in the ordinary course proceed to secondary schools. There appear to be good grounds for believing that one result of the establishment of these schools has been a considerable reduction in the proportion of young persons who on leaving the primary school proceed at once to some form of employment. The number of pupils on the rolls of day technical schools during the year was 1,253, of whom 545 were males. Free places were held by 1,146 pupils, including 507 males. Of the free pupils 1,023 held junior free places tenable for two years, while 123 held senior free places tenable for three years.

The arrangement and conduct of these day classes being a comparatively simple matter in comparison with evening classes, it has been deemed expedient to amend the Education Act so as to allow of certain approved day classes being carried on as organized schools rather than as groups of classes. Provision has also been made for a simpler method of capitation payments than necessarily obtains in connection with evening classes in the case of those classes to which the term "day technical school" as defined in the Act is held to apply.

Special grants to Education Boards for the maintenance of training classes for teachers in various branches of manual instruction taken up in public schools were again distributed during the year. Particular attention continues to be given in connection with these classes to subjects bearing on rural occupations.

The science and art examinations of the English Board of Education and the technological examinations of the City and Guilds of London Institute were held as usual, the former at fourteen, the latter at seventeen centres. The number of entries for the science and art examinations was 873, the number of passes being 582; while for the technological examinations the number of entries was 427 and the number of passes 291. The proportion of passes to entries, in each case 66 per cent., must be regarded as very satisfactory. There has been a steady increase each year in the number of students coming up for each of these examinations.