

Capitation payments on account of free places amounted for 1908 to £6,908 0s. 6d. being at the rate of about £3 9s. per free place.

It will be seen that, as in former years, courses of commercial instruction were attended by more free pupils than any of the other courses mentioned in the table. Last year about 60 per cent. of the free pupils attended commercial courses; this year there is a slight drop, the percentage being about 53. On the other hand, there is a decided increase in the number taking courses in science and technology. It is anticipated that in the near future there will be a considerable increase in the proportion of free pupils taking courses other than commercial courses. It is a matter for regret that the number of free pupils taking courses in agriculture still remains insignificant.

The day technical schools in the larger centres continue to be well attended, chiefly by free pupils. There seems little doubt that under existing conditions the establishment of these schools has met a distinct want so far as the larger centres are concerned. Though their curriculum is mainly secondary in character, they do not appear on that account to have adversely affected the attendance at the secondary schools in their vicinity. The opinion is expressed that a not inconsiderable number of pupils qualified to hold free places would on leaving the primary schools, have gone to work had they not been able to attend a day technical school. So far as the smaller centres are concerned it is a question whether the establishment of day technical schools would not result in undesirable overlapping. In the case of such centres the better plan to pursue would appear to be the adaptation of the courses of instruction at the secondary schools and district high schools so as to meet, as far as practicable, the needs of pupils for whom an education more or less literary in character would not afford the best preparation for their life-work.

The special grants to Education Boards for the training of teachers have been continued this year. A special feature in the arrangements made for the instruction of public-school teachers in subjects of manual instruction prescribed for school classes has been the organization of special courses in the shape of winter and summer sessions. Several such courses have been held during the year, with results that seem to suggest the expediency of adopting this method where practicable in preference to the more usual Saturday classes, especially as the training colleges, which are now in full operation in the four centres should as time goes on render Saturday classes less necessary than heretofore. At the examinations of the City and Guilds of London Institute 39 teachers passed the examination in cookery, and 15 that in woodwork.

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 16, the latter at 15 centres. The number of candidates at the Science and Art Examinations was 626, of whom 403 passed; while at the Technological Examinations 330 candidates presented themselves, of whom 233 passed. Although the time, May to July, at which these examinations require to be held is not altogether convenient from the point of view of the schools, the number of schools making use of these examinations is increasing every year.

The following is a summary of the expenditure by the Government during the year on manual and technical instruction:—

Capitation,—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
School classes	17,402	4	6			
Technical classes.. .. .	17,601	2	7			
Free places	6,908	0	6			
				41,911	7	7
Subsidies on voluntary contributions,—						
School classes	225	4	8			
Technical classes.. .. .	6,156	17	6			
				6,382	2	2
Grants for buildings, equipment, and rent,—						
School classes	3,633	10	0			
Technical classes.. .. .	21,961	10	8			
Grants for material for technical classes	1,535	17	3			
				27,130	17	11
Railway fares of instructors and students				2,973	0	0
Examinations				580	1	0
Inspection and other expenses.. .. .				1,096	5	1
				27,130	17	11
Total				£80,073	13	9