

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM THE FORTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

GENERAL.

THE work of the technical schools and classes has been generally satisfactory, and has proceeded on the lines of previous years. A slight decrease in the number of students attending classes has, however, to be recorded. This decrease is due generally to the abnormal conditions, and particularly to a diminution in attendances in certain country districts at special classes, which for a few years were very popular. Viewed as a whole both the attendances and work of the students are most gratifying. That a lad after a day's hard work should, for the purpose of mental improvement or of gaining a knowledge of the principles underlying his trade or craft, voluntarily attend technical classes—in some cases on as many as four evenings per week—proves the growth of a desire and of a spirit which is worthy of more practical recognition.

The total number of students receiving instruction in all technical classes was 19,657, as compared with 20,747 for the previous year. Of this total 2,504 students held free places at technical high schools, 4,211 held free places at other classes, and 1,324 were attending continuation and technical classes held under the regulations for compulsory attendance. As was to be expected, the demand for funds arising out of the war has had the effect of decreasing the contributions in money to technical schools from local bodies, industrial and other organizations. The sum contributed for the calendar year, and on which subsidy was paid, amounted to £1,948, a decrease of £1,011 on the contributions of 1917. This, however, can only be regarded as temporary, as there is no evidence of diminishing interest in the schools and their work.

CLASSES OTHER THAN CLASSES AT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS.

Classes were held in 131 centres. The number of classes and the number of individual students were as follows:—

Description of Class.	Number of Classes.		Number of Students.	
	1917.	1918.	1917.	1918.
Conducted by Education or High School Boards ..	1,107	1,111	10,619	9,176
Conducted by Technical School Boards or by Managers ..	675	672	7,070	6,949
Conducted by University Colleges	180	182	711	785
Totals	1,962	1,965	18,400	16,910

The following are some particulars of the age, sex, and occupations of students:—

	Seventeen Years of Age and under.		Over Seventeen Years of Age.		Totals.	
	1917.	1918.	1917.	1918.	1917.	1918.
Males	4,673	4,657	3,996	3,573	8,669	8,230
Females	4,106	4,009	5,625	4,671	9,731	8,680
Totals	8,779	8,666	9,621	8,244	18,400	16,910