

Nearly 25 per cent. of the total number of students in attendance at classes held free places under the Government regulations. The total number of junior free pupils shows an increase of 153, as compared with the number for 1917; and the total number of senior free pupils shows an increase of 81. 442 students held scholarships or free places provided locally. A fair proportion of the increase in the number of free-place holders is due to the attendance at technical classes of young persons, not otherwise qualified for a free place who have been recommended by an Inspector of Schools for the award.

Three additional school districts have brought the regulations for the compulsory attendance of young persons at continuation classes into operation during the year. The number of students in attendance under the regulations was as follows:—

Auckland Education District	..	..	495 students in 12 school districts.
Taranaki Education District	..	..	151     "     4     "
Wanganui Education District	..	..	568     "     6     "
Hawke's Bay Education District	..	..	110     "     1     "
Total ..	..	..	1,324     "     23     "

During the year under review 353 returned soldiers availed themselves of free tuition at technical schools and classes, twenty-seven centres making provision for this important work. The attendances show an increase of over 100 per cent. on those of 1917. Instruction is provided in the following subjects: Electrical, motor, and mechanical engineering; carpentry and joinery; and commercial subjects. The Repatriation Department has provided the necessary funds for additional instructors and equipment wherever necessary.

The following technical schools had a roll number of more than 500, exclusive of the technical high schools carried on in connection with some of them:—

School.	Roll Number.	
	1917.	1918.
Christchurch Technical School	1,267	1,276
Dunedin Technical School	1,105	1,147
Wellington Technical School	1,256	1,139
Auckland Technical School	1,211	1,047
Wanganui Technical School	654	578
Palmerston North Technical School	660	560
Invercargill Technical School	524	550

Capitation earnings for the year amounted to £34,917, as against £33,749 paid in 1917. It will be noted that, compared with 1917, there is a decrease of 1,490 students in the total number receiving instruction, and an increase of £1,168 in capitation payments. The decrease is unquestionably largely due to a falling-off in the number of students attending single classes in country districts, and not in the number of those who are taking a more or less related group course; and the increase in the number of free-place holders, for whom additional payments are made, accounts for the increase in the capitation earnings. The amount earned in respect of free pupils was £10,750, made up as follows: Free-place holders, £8,857; compulsory pupils, £1,441; discharged soldiers, £453. All of the last-named earn not only the ordinary rate of capitation, but an additional 3d. for each hour of attendance.

Technological examinations were conducted by the Department on behalf of the City and Guilds of London Institute at sixteen centres in the Dominion. The total number of entries was 252, a decrease on the number for the previous year, and the number of passes was 129.

#### TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS.

No increase has been made during the year in the number of technical high schools, but there are indications of an advance to a clearer understanding of the value of this type of secondary school; and time appears to prove that it is capable of filling a not unimportant place in our national system of education. It provides a foundation course of instruction in the recognized culture subjects of general education, at the same time not underestimating the cultural value of a properly directed