

open to question whether it would not be in the best interest of junior free pupils destined for commercial or domestic pursuits, for such pupils to hold their free places at a secondary school, taking thereat suitable courses of instruction in preparation for more advanced definite courses in commercial instruction or domestic science at technical schools, which those who were qualified would attend as holders of senior free places.

Reviewing the work of the technical schools as a whole, we have to report that the art classes, except in a few isolated instances, continue to do sound, systematic work. The increased attention given to the various branches of applied art or art crafts, the emphasis laid on the fact that design is something more than an ingenious exercise on paper, and the insistence on the attendance of pupils learning an art craft at classes directly related to the craft, all go to show that the relation between the work done and the problem of production in the ordinary manufactories of to-day is beginning to receive attention at the hands of those responsible for the conduct of art classes; and, further, show that we are beginning to realise, as in the older countries, that art schools exist not merely to give instruction in drawing, painting, and abstract design, without relation to any craft or profession except that of the artist, but also to give a thorough and all-round training in art generally, and at the same time provide for the training of students in a specific art. Professor Lethaby, of the Royal College of Art, London, in a lecture to students of the Birmingham School of Art, says, "So far as I have observed the modern schools of art and their students, it has seemed to me that the greatest hindrance to success is lack of *definiteness*, the vague idea that art in general is a profession. . . . Art schools as I knew them in the past were adapted most for teaching the profession of *scholarship-gaining*. Even now, unless the student on entering an art school is already attached to some craft, and looks to the school for collateral instruction, or unless he has made up his mind for a special branch of art and specialises in that, little is to be expected but the expenditure of a few amusing years and his possible emergence as an art master." And, further, speaking of the work of schools of art generally, the professor says, "Nothing was known by the student of the grooves in which manufactures ran; no choice of employment was set before him; and the only categories he knew were those of the code: all his drawings were 'antique,' 'life,' 'advanced design,' or 'advanced shading from the cast.' In opposition to this false system of classification I would substitute a classification based on the practice of every-day craft life. Even elementary drawing I would have taught from such things as fine examples of lettering, heraldic design, and flowers, birds, and beasts, so that the student's intellect might be stimulated and his heart reached while his hand was drawing. At present copies are often dry abstractions, entirely wasteful and intellect-destroying. Then I would have it that every student entering a school of art should state what he or she intends to be, and should be put on studies germane to this purpose; the whole scheme should be such that the students should gravitate naturally into definite callings." It is gratifying to note that in some of our art classes an attempt is being made to stimulate the student's intellect and interest by a course of work on lines approximating to the course of study suggested by Professor Lethaby. For obvious reasons it is impossible in a young country to provide courses of instruction in our art schools, having a direct relation to all the crafts and industries of the district; but we note with pleasure that an attempt is being made to lift art-teaching out of the ancient and unnatural grooves into which it has fallen, and bring it into closer and more vital relationship with life. In two of our art schools an art course for holders of free places has been provided, and about sixty young persons have availed themselves of it. The course of instruction at both schools is so arranged that, while no encouragement is given to specialisation in any given direction, it is hoped that with the opportunities provided for the practical application of drawing, modelling, and design in a variety of art crafts, the students will eventually from one or other of these select a life calling. Excellent practical results have so far been achieved.

The courses of instruction and the attendance at classes for architecture and building construction and drawing may be said to be satisfactory. There is a tendency, however, in some of the classes to divorce the theory from its useful application, and to select examples for study from books rather than from models. Of course, this is largely due to the fact that at the smaller centres a suitable equipment of models is not available. This, however, will be remedied in time. We venture to express the opinion that if a few typical models were selected for study each year, and students sketched them, and then made drawings to scale of parts of buildings in which the principle illustrated in the model was used, it would afford a better training for the students than a large number of exercises in copying from models and flat copies. The excellent work in both the elementary and advanced classes at Auckland, Wanganui, Wellington, and Christchurch appears to call for special mention.

It is to be hoped that by some combined effort on the part of employers, Trades and Labour Councils, and the education authorities throughout the Dominion some scheme may be devised whereby the attendance at a course of technical instruction of a very much larger percentage of the youths engaged in the building and kindred trades may be insured.

It is satisfactory to note the increase in the number of young lads holding free places who are attending courses in woodwork, in which instruction in building construction and drawing is included.

We regret we are again unable to report much progress in the matter of the establishment of technical classes in two important branches of our staple industries—namely, agriculture and dairying. A good deal of attention, however, has been given in the majority of the education districts to the instruction of public-school teachers in nature-study, with an agricultural trend, and there is every reason to expect that these courses of instruction will bear an ample harvest by the quickening, through the primary-school classes, of a desire in the minds of our young people in rural districts for more advanced instruction. Classes in agriculture and dairying were