

DAY AND EVENING CLASSES.

Art.—In spite of many conditions which may be regarded as subversive, the attendances at art classes show a slight increase over those of the previous year, and for the most part satisfactory results have been achieved. The effect of the introduction of modern methods of instruction is producing excellent results in both drawing and painting, and the standard of the average student's work is gradually being raised. The work of the students at local exhibitions appears to show that an advance has generally been made during the past few years in both spontaneity and originality, and in some instances exceptional skill is shown in working in a variety of media. Further progress has been made in the teaching of design, instruction in which is for the most part given concurrently with the instruction in drawing. Students are afforded opportunities of applying the designs to useful purposes, a general revival of interest in craft-work is noted, and it is considered that some of the specimens of leather-embossing, metal-work, enamelling, modelling, wood-carving, &c., compare favourably with similar work produced under more favourable conditions in older countries. It must be remembered that our art students are working at a considerable disadvantage, as in the absence of a national museum and the circulation among the schools of a few of the best specimens of the work of modern and old-time workers there are few opportunities of comparing their completed works with other than those of their fellow-students. This is insufficient if a high standard of design and construction is to be attained, and it is hoped that an effort will be made to secure a few first-class specimens of students' craft studies, including silversmithing and jewellery, from British art schools for circulation among our applied art classes.

In the death of the Director of the Dunedin School of Art the Dominion has lost one of its most gifted and earnest workers. Mr. Haweridge was a skilful teacher. His wide experience combined with intellectual gifts, high ideals, and sterling character specially fitted him for the work to which he devoted himself wholeheartedly.

Building Trades.—The depression in the building trades is still affecting the attendances at classes in subjects related to these trades, but a substantial increase is noted over those of the past few years, and, speaking generally, the work of the classes is characterized by thoroughness and earnestness. For the most part the work in building-construction and drawing is carried out on lines suggested by modern English and American text-books, and these do not afford a wholly satisfactory basis for the colonial builder. In some schools this is recognized, and a course of study more in conformity with local and domestic needs is arranged. The study of the principles underlying the construction of public and private structures is, however, not neglected. As previously stated, the building trades at present offer few attractions to lads: this is reflected in the classes, and it is quite exceptional to find a preponderance of young apprentices on the roll of practical classes. The advantages to be derived from the preparation of a set of drawings and the carrying to completion of a piece of work not likely to be given to an apprentice in the ordinary course of his daily work is not sufficiently appreciated by those already in the trade, but some exceptionally good specimens of woodcraft are occasionally seen in course of construction. Similar remarks apply with equal force to classes in cabinetmaking.

It is to be regretted that the provision made by a master painters' association at one of the schools for the special training of painter, decorator, and signwriting apprentices has not proved the success anticipated. The dearth of lads entering the painting trades, the lack of ambition, and desire to excel in their work, and the general disorganization of the trade are factors which have no doubt contributed to this, and the matter will probably have to await the settlement of the larger question involving the training of all learners in all trades.

A large increase is noted in attendances at classes in the theory and practice of plumbing, which are now approaching what they were previous to 1914. The opinion is expressed that much more could be done to stimulate both attendance at and interest in the plumbing classes if the New Zealand Plumbers' Board were to arrange for its examination to be taken in two parts—an elementary grade, and a final examination for the full certificate. This would enable the pass standard to be gradually raised, and would encourage apprentices to extend their course of study over two or three years, instead of attempting, as is too often done, to cram the preparation for the examination into the last year of their apprenticeship. The practical work at most schools is on sound lines, but the high cost of material has made it almost impossible to carry out schemes of work similar to those of previous years.

Domestic Subjects.—The general attention that is perforce directed to all matters related to the home has had a most stimulating effect on the teachers and students of classes in all domestic subjects. As an illustration it may be pointed out that the high cost of living has vitalized the questions of food values and economy in the use of materials, with the result that the real value of foodstuffs, hitherto neglected because of their commonness and low cost, is being realized and forced into consideration when the housewife is dealing with the preparation of the home dietary, and thus economic cookery and the preparation of palatable dishes of simpler foods have received the attention they deserve. It is, however, noted that the attendance of adults at cookery classes is steadily declining, the main reason for which is undoubtedly the completeness of the instruction in cookery that a large percentage of our girls are receiving in the primary and secondary schools. A few years ago the knowledge of cookery and the elements of sound housewifery was limited in the case of children leaving the primary school. To-day it is not so, and the mothers of "the race that is to be" will be better fitted to do for the children in their homes than which the State, for obvious reasons, is unable to do—teach cookery under home conditions. Thanks to the disinterested pioneer work of Mrs. Miller, Mrs. Gard'ner, Mrs. Turner, and others, the foundation of a sound system of training in practical domestic subjects has been laid in this Dominion, and the generosity and sterling work of others have now made it possible to give a course of instruction in the underlying principles of the domestic arts that will ensure a supply of teachers having the necessary basic scientific knowledge. In the near future when the demand for teachers is not so persistent, with the present available facilities, the complete training of domestic-science teachers in both theory and practice will be within reasonable reach of accomplishment.

It is gratifying to note the increasing use that Hospital Boards are making of the technical school cookery classes for the instruction of probationary nurses in invalid cookery, which is a compulsory subject in the nurses' qualifying examinations. The course is usually confined to ten