

for him to be able to prepare drawings for internal as well as external decorations, and at times to design internal fittings and furniture for a house. A reminder is given to those responsible for the conduct of elementary classes composed substantially of young pupils, that the preparation of a set of plans from data supplied by the instructor should not form part of the class work.

*Agriculture.*—We again have to report that very little progress has been made during the year in the extension of classes relating to agriculture and dairying. One important branch has, however, received a little more attention than formerly, and it is pleasing to be able to report an increase in the number of classes in wool-sorting. At one of the centres at which day classes are held a course of instruction in a group of subjects bearing on agriculture has been attended by nearly a dozen lads. Wool-sorting is included in this course. In one district the members of the wool-sorting classes were afforded an opportunity of putting the instruction they had received to a practical test, and incidentally to demonstrate to small sheep-farmers the advantage of classing the whole of their wool before disposing of it. Accompanied by their instructor, they visited the wool-shed of a sheep-farmer interested in their work, and classed the contents of a certain number of bales of wool ready for the London market. The returns of the sale of this wool are awaited with interest, as it is contended that the wool will bring a higher price in open market than if it had been unclassified. It is suggested that agricultural and pastoral associations might include among the very interesting series of competitions usually arranged at the several shows, competitions in wool-classing. If this were done it might have the effect of helping to focus the interest farmers are beginning to take in technical training and of giving an impetus to the formation of classes in districts where wool-growing is one of the principal industries.

*Carpentry and Joinery, Cabinetmaking, &c.*—The standard of work done in these classes is slightly higher than last year. More attention is being given to drawing, and as a consequence the work generally is more intelligently done. But at the smaller centres matters referred to in last year's report remain, generally speaking, unaltered. The classes in carpentry and joinery and cabinetmaking are mostly attended by amateurs, apprentices and workers engaged in the trade being conspicuous by their absence. The cause of this is difficult to discover. It cannot lie with the instructors, for in most cases the classes are in charge of capable mechanics, who in their daily work command the respect and confidence of their respective trades; neither can the cause be traced to lack of provision in the matter of the necessary equipment and tools, as the majority of the workshops in which the classes are held are liberally supplied with first-class tools and most of the conveniences for carrying on both elementary and advanced work. It is to be feared that the cause lies in the lack of ambition on the part of young apprentices and workers.

With regard to the classes for painting, decorating, and sign-writing, it is a matter for regret that, except in one solitary instance, no attention is being given to instruction in underlying principles. The painting classes appear to aim only at giving the students ability to grain, or, in other words, imitate special woods with pigments—notably oak. The imitation is generally of a purely mechanical type, and usually consists in merely copying some-one else's imitation. Students seldom work from selected specimens of woods, and this, together with the total absence of instruction in principles, cannot be regarded with anything but disfavour. The classes in sign-writing are thoroughly good as far as they go, but the trade element preponderates. Drawing different types of letters in different media with the brush, spacing, and adapting lettering to spaces may form a series of excellent exercises; but where the preliminary training required for this, such as instruction in freehand drawing and elementary light and shade, is overlooked or not insisted on, either the students' progress must necessarily be very slow, or both students and instructors are content with a low standard of work. To discover a remedy for this is not an easy matter. The payment of a lower rate of capitation in the case of trade classes in which instruction in principles is not included is suggested in this connection.

*Commercial Work.*—There appears to be no diminution in the demand for instruction in commercial work. From the standpoint of attendances these classes are most successful. But the success from the standpoint of national efficiency may be questioned. We are informed that the demand for young persons trained for commercial pursuits in our technical classes is greatly in excess of the supply. We can quite believe this, for the training given is on sound practical lines, and those requiring the services of young clerks find it greatly to their advantage to be relieved of the responsibility of providing the preliminary training of the office-assistants. The comparatively large proportion of young people taking up clerical work as a profession, together with the apparently increasing demand for this class of worker seems to point in the direction of the growth of economic conditions which will, unless checked, assume unnatural proportions, and prove a source of trouble in the future.

*Dressmaking, Domestic Science, &c.*—Classes in dressmaking throughout the Dominion are well attended, and the work done in most of them appears to be well adapted to the needs of the students. It is to be hoped that something may be done in the near future in the way of providing increased and better facilities for those engaged in the workrooms of the drapery and millinery establishments in the larger centres, at least, for technical instruction in dressmaking, &c. The instruction at present provided cannot, generally speaking, be regarded as altogether satisfactory, consisting as it does in most cases in the drafting of patterns by the aid of patented charts, and in the making-up of certain garments. It should not be difficult for employers and the technical schools to come to some agreement on the matter, as has been done in London and elsewhere.

Messrs. Debenham and Freebody, for example, allow certain dressmaking apprentices to attend on two afternoons a week a course of instruction at certain technical schools. The firm report that the girls are not so useful to them during the period of their apprenticeship as other girls who do not attend classes, but that, other things being equal, they are destined to do better work later on. Courses of instruction are provided at many of the London Technical Institutes for girls engaged in the dress-making trade. The courses include such subjects as instruction in the suitability of certain materials