

some such lines as the following: The evolution of household and other furniture; the hand tools used in the trade; practical geometry and setting-out of work; the various joints used in cabinet work and their application in particular cases; the general principles of carcass work as applied to wardrobes, sideboards, book-cases, &c.; veneers and veneering; marquetry and banding; the application of carving; moulding; constructional metal-work; the growth and structure of the timbers used in antique and modern cabinet work; their ports of shipment; methods of conversion from logs; seasoning, shrinkage, warpage, defects, &c., as suggested in "Modern Cabinet-work, Furniture, and Fittings," by P. A. Wells, head of the cabinet department of the Shoreditch Technical Institute. There are other suggestive books, but the work referred to is written by a practical teacher, and is therefore likely to be of more value to an instructor desirous of knowing the lines on which a class in the theory of cabinet-making should be conducted. The student should be encouraged to produce original designs as home exercises, and to assist him in this some practice in design should be included in the course. The hurry and the short-method "tricks" of the competitive workshop should have no place in the technical-school workshop. With the view of sustaining the students' interest in both theory and practice it is suggested that at least one piece of original work should be produced each year, in the construction of which each member of the class takes a part. Such specimens would serve a useful purpose as examples for the guidance of future students.

It is to be regretted that there has been little or no improvement in the methods of instruction in painting, decorating, and signwriting during the year. If the painters' unions or the master painters' associations could see their way to take up the matter of the training of their apprentices on similar lines to their *confreres* in Belgium, France, and Germany, the schools would, we are sure, be only too willing to provide adequate facilities for instruction in such matters as the chemistry of paints and varnishes, colour-mixing, &c. In a recent issue of an Australian painters' and decorators' journal a master painter who had visited Europe and worked as a journeyman gave an interesting description of the methods followed in the countries he visited in connexion with the training of painters, and showed how the foreign workman was superseding the English workman in the carrying-out of important decorative work. In the absence of any training on the lines he describes little can be done to elevate a trade of which some of the world's greatest artists have been members.

*Commercial Subjects.*—The large number of commercial classes and of students in attendance thereat indicates that the demand for commercial instruction has in no way abated. The instruction is mostly in the hands of experienced teachers, many of them being expert accountants with long business experience. The courses of instruction are, generally speaking, arranged to meet the requirements of young persons already engaged in offices, or who are looking forward to office-work as a means of livelihood. That these requirements have been satisfactorily met may be gathered from the readiness with which so many of the students on the completion of their course find employment. The advanced classes in accountancy, commercial law, &c., have also been well attended, and, judging by the success of students at public examinations, excellent results have been achieved. At each of the four University colleges advanced commercial courses have now been provided. It is suggested, in view of the rapid growth of our commercial and industrial interests, that more attention should be given in the commercial courses to the study of industrial history, economics, and cognate subjects. Much valuable work in this direction has been accomplished in the Old Country by means of University extension lectures. In the absence, at present, of similar means of popular education in this country it is thought that lectures dealing with the topics referred to might well find a place in the commercial courses in the larger centres at least.

*Domestic Subjects.*—The improved methods of instruction and the inclusion in many cases in the courses of work of subjects tending to make the classes in domestic subjects something more than technical in name only, referred to in last year's report, have had a noticeable effect on the work as a whole. A recent writer on domestic science says, "It has only recently been recognized that domestic subjects form a wide field for practical and utilitarian science. Many authorities are now convinced that science can be directly and adequately taught in the kitchen, that a previous training in elementary science is not indispensable, as the principles of science can often be made clear by drawing upon everyday experiences and largely by the aid of kitchen utensils and commodities." The opinion is expressed that when this is more fully recognized laboratory methods will be employed more generally than is at present the case in connexion with classes for domestic subjects. There can be no question as to the value of the practical instruction given in classes for both elementary and advanced cookery. A noticeable feature of the instruction is the attention given to economy, cleanliness, order, and method. It is pleasing to report that in one district the shipping companies have recognized the value of the certificates issued by the local technical school, and oblige applicants for positions as cooks to sit for an examination at the school, and to hold the certificate before employment is given. We hope to see this practice become more general as time goes on. At most of the principal centres arrangements have been made by the hospital authorities for the instruction at the technical schools of nurses in invalid cookery with satisfactory results.

The popularity of classes for dressmaking appears to be undiminished. The instruction is now given without reference to charts and other mechanical aids in connexion with the drafting of patterns, and the character of the work generally shows that it is not impossible to teach dress-making on sound and satisfactory lines without the use of such things.