teachers, possibly with the view of securing the sustained interest of their pupils, have introduced too great a variety of unrelated subjects of handwork into their schools; in some it amounts almost to a different subject for each standard class. Whatever the intention may be, the practice is not calculated to enhance the value of handwork as an instrument of education. It may be conceded that the subject is of little importance provided that the method of instruction be right. Nevertheless the value of the most approved methods may be diminished by repeated change of subjects; a graded course of instruction for each standard in the ordinary subjects of the school syllabus is regarded as a necessity, and the opinion is expressed that the full benefits to be derived from a course of instruction in handwork cannot be realised unless the work is properly systematized as in other subjects of instruction.

In the higher primary classes and in the secondary classes of the district high schools the subjects most generally taken up are drawing in light and shade, elementary design, woodwork, cookery, various branches of elementary science, and elementary agriculture. The number of district high schools where well-equipped laboratories are available is increasing every year, with the result that it is now possible for pupils in such schools to receive individual practical instruction in various branches of science. The number of recognised classes for practical science in operation last year was 57. Where laboratories are not yet available a course in elementary physical measurements such as may be carried out in the ordinary class-rooms was taken by ninety-four classes, with satisfactory results in most cases. It appears, however, necessary again to point out that the practice of instructors working through a comprehensive series of experiments with the assistance of batches of pupils is not in accordance with the regulations. A few exercises and experiments carried out by the pupils themselves will be found to be of more value educationally. It should also be remembered that the text-books on elementary physics in general use are not as a rule written for very young pupils. They are more suited for classes at secondary schools. If they are used in public schools, only those exercises and experiments that are within the comprehension of the pupils should be attempted, and the programme of work should include only experiments which can be performed with the available apparatus, and by the pupils themselves. It is generally accepted that exercises in measuring and weighing are among the best introductions to the use of physical apparatus. The difficulty of obtaining a simple, cheap, and yet approximately accurate balance appears, however, to be a serious obstacle. That good work can be done with a roughly constructed balance has been amply proved, but the question arises as to whether time spent by young pupils in making these rough balances could not be used to greater advantage if a cheap and effective balance were available. In one district this question is under consideration, and experiments are in progress with the view of producing such a balance. It is hoped that the experiments will be successful, and that it will be found practicable to manufacture suitable balances within the Dominion.

We have had repeatedly to call attention to certain defects in the instruction in cookery; it is therefore gratifying to be able to record some improvement. In most of the cookery centres and classes considerable attention is being given to principles, and while in some cases the demonstration and "the method" are still considered to be the all-important part of the instruction outside the practical work, in the majority of cases instruction in such subjects as the physiology of digestion and the relative food-values of the ordinary articles of diet is considered to be of as much importance as instruction in the preparation and cooking of food. In other words, the instruction is more educational and more closely allied to the other subjects of the school syllabus than heretofore. In one district an effort has been made to arrange a course of instruction for girls in subjects connected with home life, and, although the course cannot be regarded as complete, it is evidence of a move in the right direction.

The most marked improvement, however, is to be found in the woodwork centres, and as a result both the drawing and the practical work in the majority of districts reach a very much higher plane of excellence than in past years. Greater attention is being given by most of the instructors to the demonstration lesson and to instruction in the life-history of the trees from which most of the timber used in building and woodworking is cut. The value of the instruction would, however, be enhanced if these lessons were given in the form of brief notes which the pupils could write down instead of in the form at present adopted. The brief simple lecturette has its place in the course of instruction; but all the instruction should be given in such a way as to make it possible for a pupil to take full notes. Such notes would form a record of the work done in the class during the year, and would be useful not only to the pupil, but also to visiting officials. Notebooks are seldom used in any district. When instructors realise that time devoted to making intelligible sketches to illustrate the notes is not so much time lost from practical work, the value of the lessons as an aid to mental training will be considerably increased. It should not impose a great hardship on either pupils or instructors if the notes taken at each lesson were expanded as an exercise in English, and returned to the instructor for comment and correction at the next lesson.

The relative value of a course of instruction in elementary science and a course in woodwork has been under consideration by experts in both subjects for some time past, and the conclusions arrived at appear to be that, provided woodwork is taught as it should be, the value of the lessons from all points of view is not less than that of a course in elementary science. In advocating the value of the woodwork lessons great emphasis has been laid on points to which attention has been called in previous reports. One expert concludes his plea as follows: "The money spent on building and equipping workshops would have been spent to greater purpose in the erection and equipment of laboratories unless woodwork instructors adopt methods of teaching woodwork similar to those adopted in the modern science laboratory."

Good work continues to be done in classes for advanced needlework and elementary dressmaking. In the latter classes most satisfactory results continue to be achieved without recourse to any other mechanical aid than a tape measure and a ruler for drafting patterns. It is not apparent that the