

COURSES AND QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION.

The courses in combined and technical high schools show no radical departures from accepted practice in either content or treatment, but continue to be developed in a satisfactory way having regard to the facilities at the disposal of each school.

The instruction in evening classes is, in general, well organized and efficiently supervised, and provides a valuable contribution to the well-being of the community.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.

This question is one that has always presented much difficulty, especially with regard to instructors of trades subjects in which it is essential that the instructor should have had a sound and systematic industrial training before he becomes a teacher. It is obvious that the existing courses of training for teachers would not be at all suitable for giving the kind of training required, nor would the candidate, in most cases, be able to comply with the necessary conditions for entry into training colleges.

Partial solution of the problem may, however, be found and put into practice relatively easily in some such ways as are suggested below:—

(1) The Department has made provision in its regulations for the employment of part-time student teachers in evening classes, it being intended that such student teachers should use this opportunity of testing their aptitudes for teaching and for acquiring technique under the guidance of experienced teachers while continuing their daily work as tradesmen. These student teacherships have hitherto been seldom taken up.

(2) The appointment of a well-qualified tradesman as a full-time teacher to assist an experienced teacher with large classes for a period of not less than one year. During this period the assistant teacher will learn much of teaching method, and will usually become ready to take a position of full responsibility after his period of training. This method is particularly applicable to the training of teachers of handicraft for manual-training purposes, and, though it has given excellent results where prudently applied, it has many obvious limitations.

(3) The holding of refresher courses and sectional conferences of selected teachers. In order that such conferences may be successful they must be organized on other than a voluntary basis, and with the co-operation of the Education Department and of the appropriate teachers' organization. Something in this direction has already been done with successful results.

(4) The granting of leave of absence, with pay and allowances, to selected teachers to enable them to visit schools in this or in other countries. Such visits should be planned so as to be purposeful and effective, and detailed reports would be expected of teachers who were thus privileged to visit other schools. Such visits may be made under the existing regulations, and have been made from time to time; but much good would come from an increase of facilities.

It must be pointed out that suggestions (3) and (4) would both entail additional expenditure, but the cost of putting schemes into operation on a moderate scale would be much less than that now spent on the training of teachers for primary-school work.

ART AND INDUSTRY IN EDUCATION.

The connection between art and industry is a matter which vitally concerns the technical schools. In all countries increasing attention is being paid to the design of industrial products, not only that these may function more efficiently, but also that they should present a more attractive appearance. The evidences of this trend are to be seen around us every day, in motor-cars, buildings, furniture, printing, textiles and clothing, packeted foodstuffs, and indeed in almost every commodity in daily use. In the past there has been a tendency to regard questions of design which are non-structural in character as being matters for the art instructors but not of much concern to the engineer or carpenter; and there has, in fact, often been a lack of reasonable co-operation between the art departments of schools and those departments engaged in construction. On the other hand, where close co-operation exists, as is the case in some schools, the results of such co-operation have been strikingly good. For a perfect combination it is necessary that the artist should have knowledge of industrial processes, and that the craftsman should have had a sound training in the principles of art; only in so far as these conditions are fulfilled can there be a real communion one with the other.

It is because these conditions are essentially lacking in the technical schools of New Zealand that the art departments of these schools have had up to the present no discernible effect upon industrial design in this country; the greater part of their activities is concerned with the teaching of drawing and painting upon traditional lines, and they are not greatly interested in the impingement of design upon the everyday life of ordinary people.

This is not the case in other countries; changes, amounting almost to a renaissance, have taken place in the art schools of Great Britain in the post-war period, and the advance is even more marked in certain continental countries, notably in Austria, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and France. In these countries the closest possible co-operation exists between the art schools and local industries, and this connection is deliberately fostered by the action of the Governments of the countries concerned. If the manufacturing industries