

# Practical Education Handwork in Secondary Schools\*

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*late of Workington*

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Handwork and Examinations in Secondary Schools. — The first words that escape a secondary teacher when Handwork is mentioned are, "But what of examinations and bursarships?" It is significant that the principle of "learning by *doing*" is less often actually attacked nowadays than previously, and that the attitude has changed to that of seeking excuses for evasion. It is easier to work on well-established lines than to invent new ones; it is also a dangerous experiment to interfere with an already established teaching method that has for its climax the passing of a specific examination. The secondary teacher often regards the handwork portion of the curriculum as so much 'waste' time, or, at least, ineffective time so far as examination work is concerned. And it is granted that the inflated claims and pious hopes of some handwork enthusiasts have already done much harm to the cause.

Let us confess at the outset that with us handwork is an expression of the spirit of teaching. The proportion of actual handwork is, of course, greater in the lower forms, where the first stake must firmly be planted and driven home towards the final structure of versatility and mental agility; it is less and less evident in the higher form time-tables because the spirit of it is more and more incorporated with the ordinary tasks of the scholar. Where it has helped to create an attitude of mind, its work is done.

The work of the upper forms of a secondary school is largely controlled by the subjects that are to be offered in the selected external examination. The masters of these forms each require as much time as the time-table can be stretched to give, and to some extent this is justified. There is little harm in lessening the amount of practical handwork in these forms inasmuch as its work has largely been done in the lower school, though it should not be deleted entirely.

*Preparation of Pupils for Higher Form Work* — In ordinary circumstances the form

master's complaint is of a lack of the power of clear reasoning, an inability to attack any problem away from the beaten track, and possibly a lack of system and method in the approaching of a new subject. The master complains and deplores that he has to devote so much of his time to the technique of learning as to leave little in which to deal with his special subject. If this be true, then surely the point of application of the remedy is in the lower school. Boys should be handed over into the upper forms with the above necessary qualifications. There is no upper form master will deny this.

Now, common sense cannot be taught through abstract ideas, nor can it be made a time-table subject. Common sense comes of experience, of a long acquaintance with actualities, of time given up to experiment, to deductive and inductive reasoning; and this again cannot truly be a formal subject — or it would be a word subject only — a kind of outside plastering, which would chip off as soon as it dried.

It was hoped, and with reason, that science subjects would provide this training, but unfortunately the teaching of science is costly, and often can only be undertaken when it becomes an examination subject, whence it follows that it cannot be taught upon a natural and experimental system; for examinations are given mainly to test the amount of information possessed by the candidate, and science courses are therefore mostly arranged for the supplying of this necessary information. Even if freed from the examination necessity, there are scores of science teachers in this country who would still go on teaching information science instead of intelligence science; so that, to a great extent, science has failed to justify itself in the curriculum — and it will continue to fail while ever it has to be presented in an authoritative spirit, in order to secure examination results. That handwork can begin before science, and lay necessary useful foundations, is not

generally realised. We are, in fact, driven lower and lower down the school, and it is perhaps in Form III. (ages twelve to thirteen) that we first secure unhampered conditions; and in order to prevent the premature spoiling of our material it is well to go right down from here to the lowest form in the school, and make these three forms the ones in which special care and attention shall be paid to handwork.

*Junior Form Handwork fostering the Research Spirit.* — In the most junior forms in the school, then, the importance of hand-work is greatest, as here, if at all must be laid the foundations for the super-structure, the base that will carry the edifice of common sense. And here we are guided by four main principles:-

(1) The child must have experience in as many media as possible.

(2) Problems of construction must be incorporated into the handwork, and must be of such character as not to dismay the child, and yet be sufficiently difficult to make success something of an achievement.

(3) The physical strength of the child must be equal to any task that may be demanded of him in the material selected.

(4) The child must do the thinking, for no mere subject or medium added to the curriculum will produce the desired effect; the value of the training depends just on how far the work, both in design and execution, is that of the child.

It does not appear that any one material can possibly lead to our desired goal — everything will depend upon the breadth of experience provided, and the amount of thought the child has given to the work in hand.

*The Value of Mistakes.* — From a considerable experience of manual work as taught in schools it would appear to be necessary to plead that the child should be allowed to make mistakes. Too often the aim and end of manual lessons (especially in cookery) would appear to be the production

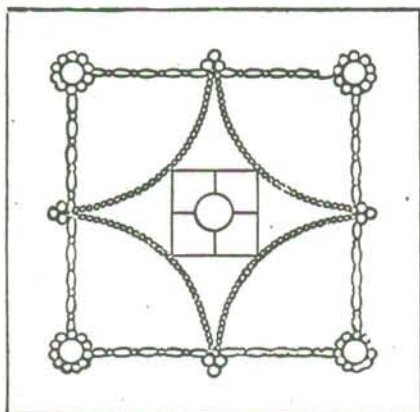
of a desirable (and saleable) article — by hook or crook. The teacher watches, coaxes, cajoles; and prevents all kinds of natural and enlightening errors for the sake of making her lesson pay — probably one of the most stupid fallacies ever emanating from the demands of an Education Committee. As a cook-shop a school kitchen is not — need not be — an ideal place, any more than a cook-shop need be an ideal educational establishment. It is here, indeed, that we reach the root of the matter. 'So long as handwork is taught solely for the acquirement of technique, so long will it fail to justify itself in a school curriculum. And I group in this word handwork, all the practical work of a school, including needlework. When handwork is primarily something the child wants to do, and when our handwork lesson is just the provision of tools, materials, and the guiding spirit of a teacher, it will be found to contribute its share to the mental development that ends in common sense. We can no more make common sense than we can make crystals; we can only arrange conditions so that they may have every opportunity of forming. It is my case that handwork is an atmosphere, a condition, a bursting forth of the spirit of the teaching, and should — must — pervade the whole school, and every subject in it.

*Outline of Method.* Granted that diverse materials should be provided and experimented upon, the method of approach is clear. A working bench alone is provided at first, and in junior forms (ten-year-olds) a piece of modelling clay. The children are allowed to make anything they like, and soon learn the limitations of the material. Few products will be worth keeping, but they should nevertheless be kept for a while if only to show what happens to clay on drying and to suggest the passing along to another medium for permanent objects. The methods will be disastrous at first, but a few minutes' silent experience will show the

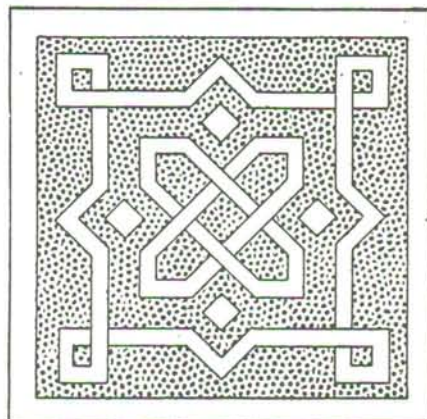


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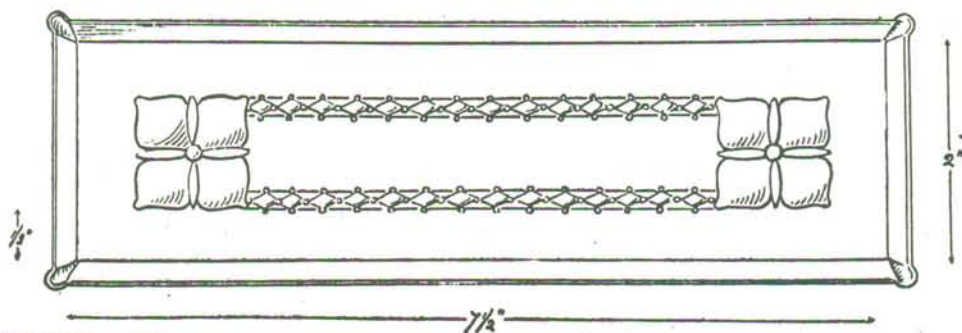
Nº 1. MAT. Brass. 5.M.G.



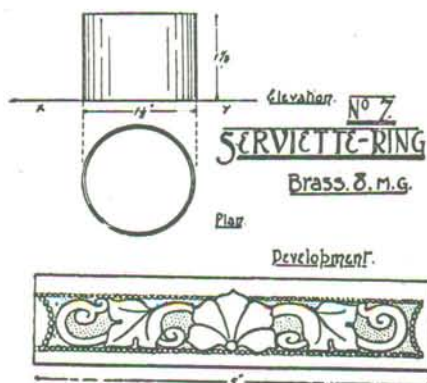
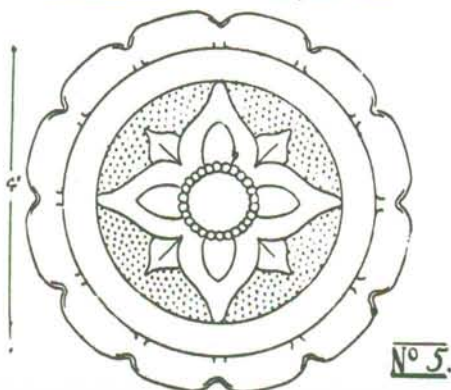
Nº 3. TEA-POT STAND. Brass. 8.M.G.



Nº 2. PEN-REST Brass. 5.M.G.



ASH-TRAY. Copper. 8.M.G.



advantage of building up as against breaking down. And presently the child will call for tools. Let it suggest its own; let it make shift with anything it can see that appears likely to serve its purpose. Let it fail — or succeed

and reason therefrom. I do not consider a high technical efficiency at all a necessary or even desirable attainment as a result of these elementary lessons, and I would suggest passing along quite soon to chalk and pastel drawings, to water-colour work, to raffia, cardboard, and to simple needlework and light woodwork for girls and boys respectively; always allowing the suggestion to come from the scholar — both as to what should be made and how. Let them call for what tools they wish, and let them use their chosen appliance. They will suggest better ones as soon as they notice bad and clumsy work; before long they will acquire a very real desire for systematic training in technique in order that they may more fittingly make the object of their desire. And they willingly pay the price of tool drill and of 'exercises,' in order to move faster and with greater precision later on. Even this tool drill need not be uninteresting; but I see no objection to its being a task the child undertakes as the payment of a price for the acquirement of a desired standard of skill.

The task of the teacher in fixing a standard of technique is a difficult one, for no unvarying standard will serve; the accuracy demanded ought to vary with the purpose of the subject — its proportion should be constant, not its standard.

The boys pass on to woodwork, metalwork, glasswork metallurgy, and the girls to needlework, cutting out, laundry and cookery, according to the needs of the district, the necessities of other subjects in the school, the tastes and qualifications of the available staff; for by this time other subjects have begun to desire the assistance of handwork, and to ask favours of it. But throughout, the spirit must be that of personal expression, desire to make or to do,

experiment and trial with materials and with tools, until the security of experience makes prediction of failure or success instinctive.

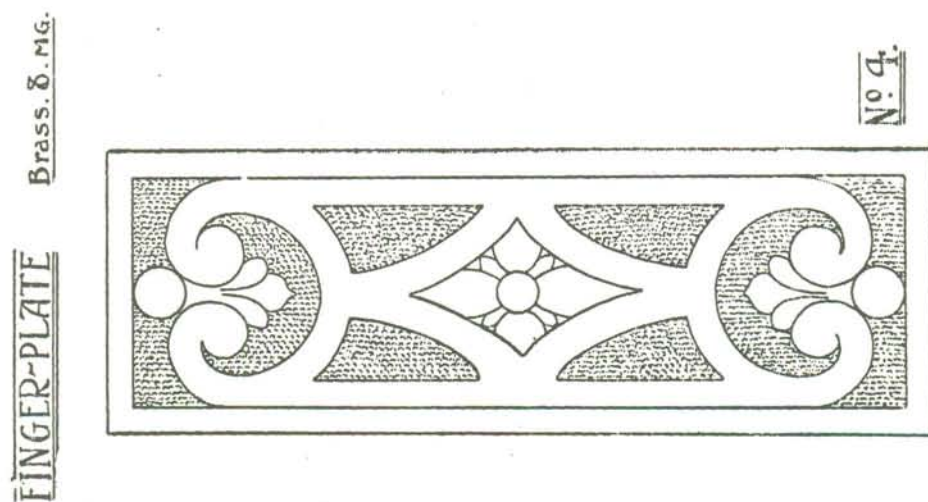
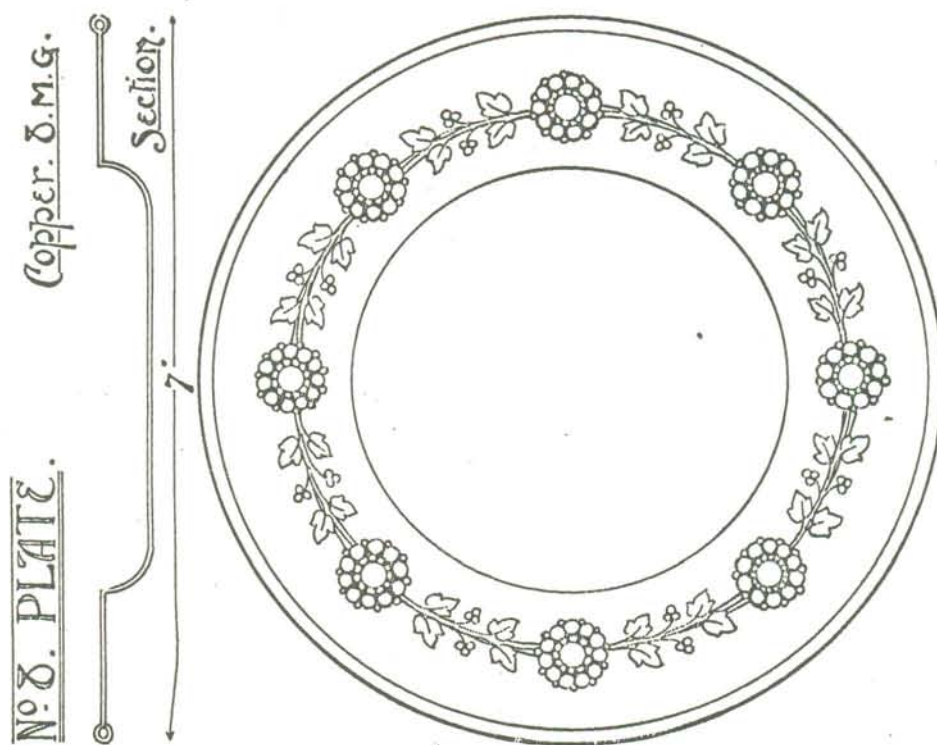
The result is that boys and girls pass on to their upper forms with the following principles deeply rooted :-

1. If one method will not solve a problem, another is to be tried.
2. Prepare all parts separately and completely before finally fitting together to make a complete whole.
3. Look carefully at details, knowing that anything less than right is a source of weakness — *even if it does not show*, and so on. Any science master will at once grant that boys and girls who treat these principles as axiomatic will be excellent material for him to work upon, while the ability of the pupils to handle delicate tools and apparatus without clumsiness, and with a reasonable amount of security, will save him many grey hairs.

Upon such grounds as these, it is suggested that handwork in a secondary school pays, and pays well, not only when it precedes the modern or science course, but when it forms a foundational subject for the commercial and literary sides also; for handwork methods are fundamental; they produce, at an early age, a mental attitude usually not attained till much later, and this is what we all desire.

\* First published in *The Book of School Handwork* 'An encyclopaedia of Educational Handwork Subjects, Methods, Materials, Tools, Organisation etc. Written by the leading authorities on, and leading teachers of Handwork in the British Isles. Edited by H. Holman, London: Caxton c 1908.

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aims, content and evaluation of a specific area of the school curriculum. For the Goldsmiths' team the strategy of enquiry was different. They saw their main task as the study of children and their behaviour in a wide variety of school situations and they made detailed recordings of what they saw and heard. To this they added a remarkably broad examination of developmental theory drawing upon sources as widely ranging as Leonard's *Education and Ecstasy*, Jung's *Symbols of Transformation* and an extensive range of theoretical studies in art and aesthetics.

The nature of the resulting report can probably best be illustrated by referring to the chapters into which it is divided. There are chapters on children and their patterns of behaviour and ways of working and on the teachers' opportunities in relation to them. There is a chapter on the atmosphere and environment in which creative work can flourish and an extended consideration of future prospects, particularly those that may spring from the training of teachers. Overall, it is quite clear that the team has found new ways of looking at children and their activities and has been able to link it with a knowledge of creativity, motivation and all-round development in a remarkably impressive way. The whole presentation of ideas is considerably enhanced by the extensive range of illustrations which form a notable feature of the book, many of them having been obtained during the course of the project investigations in the schools.

Teachers who look for ready-made ideas to take to school tomorrow morning without the need for reflection and thought will be disappointed and rightly so, because it is not the purpose of the book, or indeed of the Schools Council, to provide assistance of this sort. But teachers who study the book carefully cannot fail to have their understanding increased, even to use the somewhat dusty words of the dust jacket, to

build up their own "sound philosophical basis for art and craft teaching".

This is not to say, however, that the writers have been inhibited in presenting their own views. Far from it! There are many perceptive statements that make a good point sharply and directly. For example, the writers are refreshingly unequivocal when it comes to the question of standards on page 89:

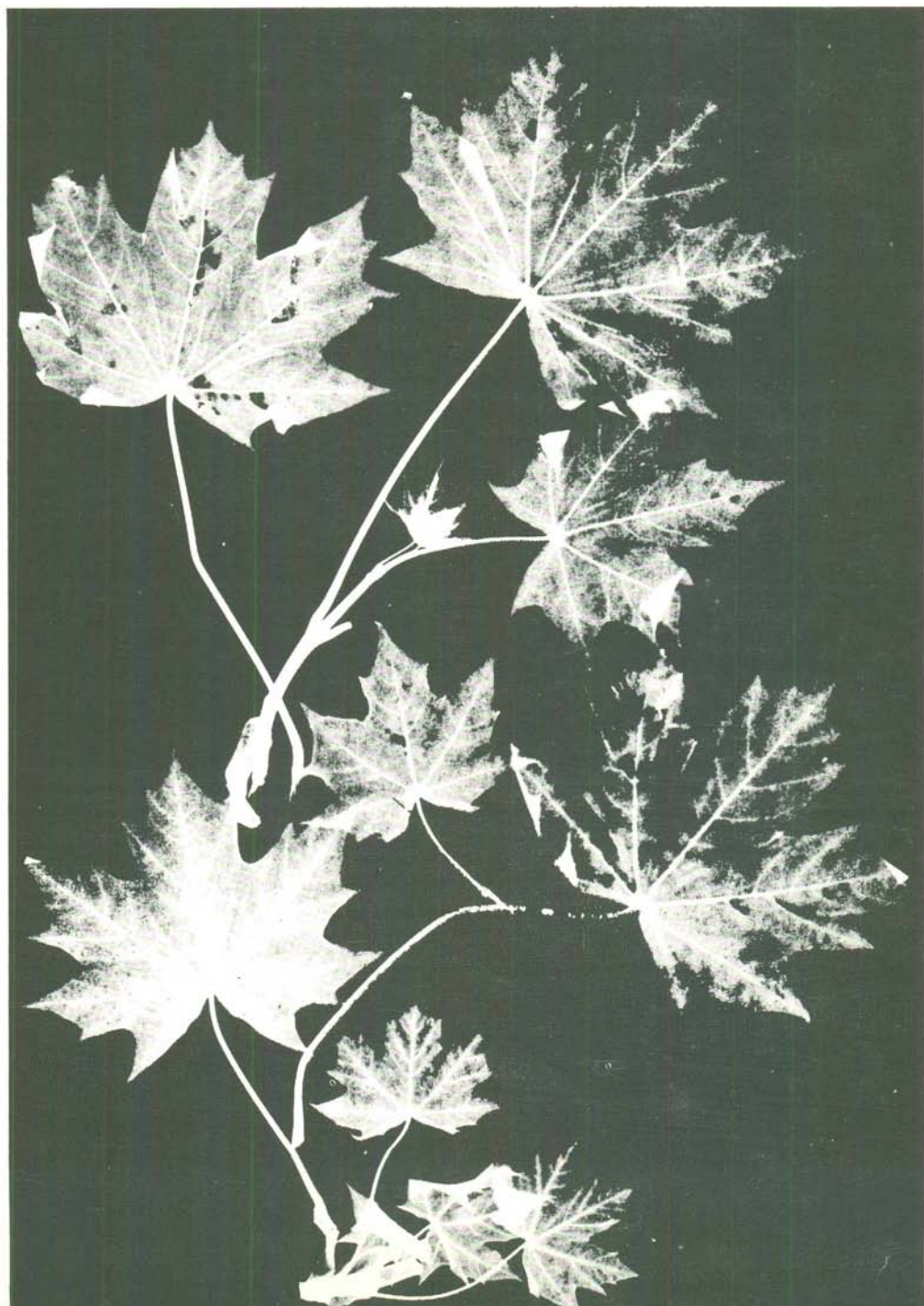
"A reliance on new techniques or easy ways of producing and presenting results in arts and crafts can lead children to be satisfied with shallow work and ultimately undermine the self-confidence they feel in expressing themselves in anything but words. We have already discussed (see Chapter 3 *The Significance of Personal Ideas*) the pressures on children to experience superficially and at second hand, whether from ready-made mechanical and imitative drawing and painting, or from the smooth and effortless tricks of television. The teacher must stand firm against this tide of mediocrity and return always to the individual child to support and strengthen his personal discovery and individual language of marks and symbols. Wherever possible he should aim to engage the child on the level of his thoughts, questions, observations and feelings, and must be aware of what can genuinely heighten perception and what are mere ephemeral gimmicks."

There are many other passages in similar vein, thus, on page 123, the critical role of the headteacher is considered:

"Of all the factors within the school which make up the creative situation, we have found the most potent to be the intangible one of attitude, which is generated largely by the head of the school. From this attitude will stem the support, or lack of it, given to each subject in the practical matters of allo-

Illustration from  
*Introducing Photograms*  
by Pierre Bruandet  
published by Batsford  
£1.90.

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cation of funds and space, and of shaping the timetable. Equally important is the warmth of encouragement and understanding which emanates from the head. Its opposite, a chilly indifference, can inhibit all but the most confident of teachers."

But above all, of course, the illustrations speak most clearly of the orientations of the writers and point the way to a style of teaching and learning in the middle schools that is likely to achieve an enthusiastic response.

The volume is supported by three others that explore the source materials of creative work — natural materials, constructional materials and other objects. There will also be twelve sets of film strips with taped commentaries "intended to promote debate among teachers on the values and purposes behind art and craft education."

Altogether the effects of the project should be powerful and welcome.

John Eggleston

## The Study of Education and Art

Edited by Dick Field and John Newick  
*London.*

*Routledge and Kegan Paul £3.80*

The editors tell us that this book is "a series of forays". It reminds me of T.S. Eliot's phrase about raids on the inarticulate. That is to say it is a difficult book, and it is not easy to decide who is the intended reader. True, the preface tells us that the book is addressed to all students of art education in universities, colleges and polytechnics, as well as to teachers in schools. I suspect that the writers, who apparently know each other quite well, are writing to each other rather than to the alleged audience. As someone

said of third programme talks, it reads like dons speaking to dons. The alleged reader feels like an eavesdropper on a private conversation, and I fear the practising teacher will find that it is too abstract, analytic and remote from practice. In her chapter, Sonia Rouve points to a possible reason for the gap when she says that "teachers crave for general ideas; researchers shun them". I would say that teachers crave for practicable ideas, and that they will find few in this book.

The book comprises seven articles and a transcription of a symposium. Several of the writers attempt to do more in the space they have than is possible, like tyro lecturers who prepare far more than will go into their fifty minutes. Take, for example, Rosemary Gordon's forty page opening "foray" on "Art: mistress and servant of man and his culture". Miss Gordon shows great erudition and writes well, but her compressed article is really an agenda for a whole book, dealing as it does with the psychology of art, imagery, symbolism, creativeness, social and cultural forces, aesthetic theories in five different cultures from China to Byzantium, and finishing with four pages of "Reflections about art today." Whisked through this world tour, the reader is apt to feel breathless, though still grateful for moments of exciting illumination.

Lionel Elvin, formerly Director of the London Institute of Education, contributes a perceptive foreword which anticipates the reviewers' task. He rightly guesses that the reader may feel that some of the contributors are struggling with their attempts at expression, and that "an active effort is required by the reader to make his own synthesis if he can". (That "if he can" is ominous.) He believes few readers will not gain from reading it, even if all they gain is "a realisation of the necessary important complexity of the subject". That sounds like damning with faint damns, especially if you question, as I do, whether all the com-



plexities of this book are necessary complexities of the subject.

Ironically, the two most intelligible chapters are written by the two professorial contributors, Professor Emeritus L.A. Reid on aesthetics and aesthetic education, and Professor L.R. Perry on education in the arts. Sadly, the two most opaque are written by the editors, and in their joint introduction they can write such inelegant statements as that art "is available to everyone although it is not necessarily availed of."

In spite of all, the experienced teacher with a philosophical turn of mind will find valuable insights in this book; other teachers, and most students, will probably gain more from re-reading Herbert Read.

Roy Shaw

### Art and Society : Sex.

Ken Baynes

*London: Lund Humphries £2.50*

This is the fourth and final volume in the series *Art and Society* (the others are *War*, *Work and Worship* — the alliteration got lost for volume 4). I reviewed the other three in this journal in vol. 5 No. 1 1972. The exhibition on which it was based received a rave review in *The Guardian* on December 18th 1972, but since then seems to have disappeared like the book without trace. The which is a great, great pity. It is constantly said and written that sex education reduces a mystery and a joy to mechanical and dull biology — and Martin Cole's first film at least can be cited to prove it (convincingly in my view). The subject reduces even the BBC to cloying coyness from time-to-time. Here is a book which presents sex through art and vice-versa — most interestingly and imaginatively — dealing not only with eroticism but also with the social and individual relations of the sexes. The text and the illustrations

are beautifully counterposed. For example on one page there is a Russian poster of a girl munition worker, Van Eyck's marriage of Giovanni Arnolfini, a knitting needle holder love token, and an Andy Capp cartoon.

The chapters are *Art and Sexuality*, *Gods and Goddesses*, *Men and Women*, *Dreams*. The range is from prehistory to modern times; from Western Europe and United States, through tribal Africa to India, China and Japan — ancient and modern; from stone carvings and sculpture, through oil painting to photography, magazine covers and pop art. For discussion on *Art or Sex or Society* you would be hard pressed to find a more useful or interesting book. And it's a pleasure to read and look at.

Ronald Frankenberg

### Independent Film Making

Lenny Lipton

*London: Studio Vista. £1.95*

This is a comprehensive guide to making films initially published in the United States not for teachers (or their pupils) but for people wanting to make their own films for love or money. The British edition has a postscript of useful local information such as how to get cheap filmstock and the addresses of film makers' workshops and sources of funds. The book is not difficult to understand although it is highly technical. It is well written and beautifully illustrated, but is much more of an "enquire within" than an introductory quiet read. It is very good value for money and the teacher or librarian who has it should not be at a loss for the meaning of a technical term or for advice to offer on film size, camera purchase or anything else relevant. Anyone who is

starting to think about film for the first time may be frightened to death. So whether you show it to them or not depends on which way you want to influence them (*Keith Kennedy. Film in Teaching*, Batsford 1972, £2.00 is a nice quiet introduction).

Ronald Frankenberg

### Romance in the Cinema

John Kibal

*Studio Vista. £2.95*

### Adventure and the Cinema

Ian Cameron

*London: Studio Vista. £2.95*

These are two glossies for the publisher; pot-boilers for the authors. They are both lavishly illustrated funbooks, but mainly I suspect for those who have lived through the birth and development of the movies, especially Hollywood style. I found the *Romance* volume the more interesting especially in the way it charts, verbally and pictorially, changing criteria of beauty and fashionableness. The *Adventure* volume is essentially anecdotal with a modicum of serious critical name dropping. My view is that for turning on interest and the school library — the more specialised series like Sheed and Wards *Cinema One* with studies of individual directors and genre, would be more useful. They are both profusely illustrated sometimes with mysterious unlabelled stills and sometimes with pictures doctored and clipped in a way which effectively conceals their original composition, contrast, colour or purpose. The focus seems to be on the star. One would need to have a very large budget to spend on film books to consider these. Even a subscription to *Films and Filming* would cover as much ground more cheaply and more graphically.

Ronald Frankenberg

### Objective and Completion Tests in 'O' Level Metalwork and Engineering Workshop Theory and Practical and Objective and Completion Tests in 'O' Level Woodwork Theory.

Edited by Ernest Clarke

*London: John Murray — 95p each set of 20 papers.*

These publications mark an important development in the field of craft education. They cannot be dismissed as just two more documents lost amongst the mass of publishers' blurb from which craft teachers have to select their material.

It must be said at once that both content and publication are excellent. The construction of objective and completion tests is a highly skilled business and the authors are to be congratulated for the technical expertise they display. But having said that the educational implications of these documents must be examined with care.

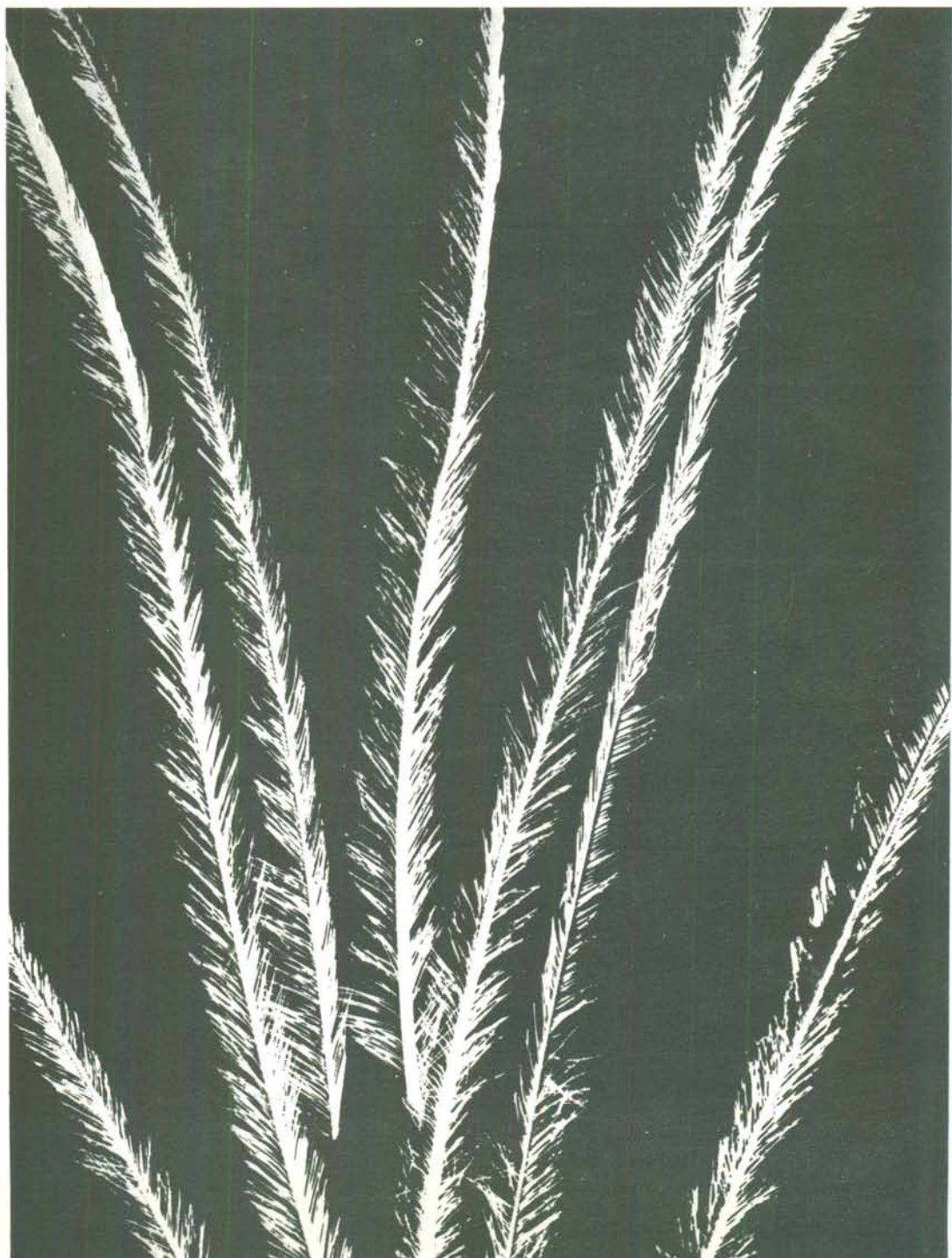
Objective and completion tests are becoming more widely used throughout the whole range of external examinations. Some of their advantages are that they can sample a wide range of knowledge quickly and effectively, they demand little writing skill and thereby reduce the possibility that an examination may test verbal fluency rather than basic knowledge. But their effectiveness can be guaranteed only if a careful pre-testing process is adopted. The authors of these books claim that the material has been thoroughly tested but I would have been happier if more information had been given on the size and nature of the student sample and the techniques used in the pre-test programme.

Assuming that the pre-testing programme was efficient the central question hinges on the desirability of using test mechanisms such as these within the general teaching programme. Excessive practice on this type



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of test may inflate a candidate's performance to a level at which the test ceases to give a reliable picture of the candidate's real ability. In external examinations in which such tests are used the candidate would therefore tend to receive a higher grade than his real ability merited.

Thus whilst recognising the very human desire of teachers to see their students do well in external examinations the issue is one of professional integrity. On the one hand these publications must be welcomed for the excellence with which they have been compiled and for the invaluable service they are likely to perform in acquainting teachers and students with a sophisticated technique of examination; on the other a note of caution must be sounded about the risk of invalidating some sections of external examinations.

The degree to which it is fair to use tests such as these in teaching programmes that lead to external examinations is a professional decision that teachers must make for themselves.

Dennis Taberner

### **Pottery, Jolyon Hofsted**

London: Evans Brothers, £1.95

### **Macrame, Mary Walker Phillips**

London: Evans Brothers, £1.95

### **Rugmaking, Nell Znamierowski**

London: Evans Brothers, £1.95

### **Framing, Eamon Toscano**

London: Evans Brothers, £1.95

### **Crochet, Emily Wildman**

London: Evans Brothers, £1.95

### **Candlemaking, Mary Carey**

London: Evans Brothers, £1.95

Can there really be any justification for yet another series of introductory craft books? Evans seem to think that the market has not yet reached saturation point and have launched their *Crafts for Today* series of which these six volumes are the first fruit. It says much for the craft revival that their market consultants have presumably encouraged them to take this step, particularly as in *Crochet, Macrame, Candlemaking* and above all in *Pottery*, they appear within months of a number of other competing volumes.

The series on inspection turns out to be American in origin, having started life as the *Pan Craft Series*. It is not quite in its original state however, having been reset with English spellings and a list of British suppliers and very elegantly printed in Italy. But it has rather more going for it than just this. The editors (and "conceivers") of the series William and Shirley Sayles, have undertaken their task with greater zeal than many editors and have imposed on their various authors a clarity of presentation in text and illustration that is remarkable. Indeed, the volumes almost approach the precision and unambiguity of a learning programme. The treatment is also impressively exhaustive without being encyclopaedic.

A further merit of the volumes is the high quality of the work illustrated. Overall the volumes form a useful guide to the best of contemporary standards in the respective crafts. This is no mean achievement; all too often writers of introductory texts settle for illustrations that are no more than technically appropriate and ignore their questionable taste.

The present reviewer found himself particularly interested in the volume on picture framing. Partly because of the dearth of good introductions to this still relatively neglected field, but also because in its own quiet way the book emphasises that framing and mounting can be as much an art form as the objects being framed. This and the other



volumes are likely to more than earn their keep in the school and college library either alone or as complements to other volumes of similar purpose.

John Eggleston

### **Art: Seymour Jennings**

*London: Heinemann £1.75*

This is a useful little book for the busy teacher to consult when he is planning lessons for various age groups. The author has provided us with a great deal of practical information on wide-ranging techniques and methods, including those which could be termed 'traditionally-accepted' to the untired; and he has included many stimulating ideas for group projects and individual work. He also provides some hints on the presentation and display of work in the classroom environment, always invaluable as a support to teaching strategies, and complements this with a brief but useful survey of the child's artistic development, from the very early years.

The reader must be aware, however, of a not unnatural tendency to follow the book's content blindly, which would restrict his creative approach to teaching and dull his interaction with his pupils and although Jennings links his studies of the micro and macro-cosmic in a fascinating way, he tends to involve himself too much with a kind of scientifically-orientated fanaticism with detail. This is too much like hard work. "At no time", he writes, "should art be regarded as mere relaxation", a puritanical viewpoint which would make the art studio atmosphere tense and extremely formal. But perhaps this is what he hopes for and he would probably argue that a more strictly academic approach to art teaching is now required to balance the present, individually-orientated art teaching syndrome. The feelings emanating from his writings suggest

that pupils should be made to work hard at all times and fascinating though this work might be, one cannot but imbibe the intensity of his rigid, formal approach. Children certainly require some formal teaching and strict application to their work, but they also need an element of freedom in which they have opportunities for experiment and discovery. They need to experience the emotions of the artist — the manipulator of materials — and yet the author does not comment on the emotional aspects of creative work. Rather, the artist is seen as a companion to the botanist and biologist, and this is to be noted in the lists of rigid subject suggestion which would have the immediate effect of dulling children's sensitivity and spontaneous creativity.

This is a good book for inspiration and ideas, but, if followed to the letter, it could produce unthinking stereotypes. It should be used with discrimination by teachers who are aware of its limitations.

John Lancaster

### **Resin Craft, Herbert Scarfe**

*London: Batsford, £2.10*

### **Creative Plastics, David Rees**

*London: Studio Vista, £2.95*

### **Expanded Polystyrene, Alan Barnsley**

*London: Batsford, £2.10*

### **Acrylic for Sculpture & Design, Clarence Bunch**

*London: Van Nostrand Reinhold, £4.95*

In the past decade the developed technological societies and many of the less developed ones have come to recognise plastics as a group of major materials with their own special properties that satisfy

distinctive needs that other materials either cannot serve or serve less well. The contrast with the recent past when plastics were regarded as inferior and unattractive substitutes is dramatic. A cynic would say that we can recognise that plastics have come of age now that there is a world shortage of these materials.

The conceptual revolution is perhaps most clearly marked when we see the widespread recognition of plastics as an expressive material in which artists and craftsmen may legitimately work. The recognition is interestingly marked by several recent books. Of these a most useful general guide is provided by Rees' *Creative Plastics*. The author uses his considerable technical understanding to explain the properties of the various plastic materials and the important differences in working procedures that follow. Rees presents his information with considerable clarity and offers, in particular, a valuable set of suggestions for working with acrylics and polyester resins. He is particularly sound on workshop techniques and his emphasis on safety is welcome.

Rees' greatest weakness is the uneven visual quality of the artifacts he illustrates — at times their crudity goes a long way to alienate the reader. The two volumes in the Batsford *Introducing Craft* series, Scarfe's introducing *Resin Craft* and Barnsley's introducing *Expanded Polystyrene* avoid this problem; their selection of finished products is far sounder. Both have the advantage Rees denied himself in that they adopt a much narrower focus that is more manageable for the reader and, one suspects, for the writer too. The result in both cases is attractive. Scarfe's book would be particularly suitable for any reader ready to graduate from the Plasticraft kit stage whilst Barnsley's indication of the potentiality of sculpting and decorating expanded polystyrene at times reaches a level of considerable excitement.

Bunch's book *Acrylic for Sculpture & Design* is also basic in that it explores

relevant workshop techniques in a very direct and helpful way. But its main function is to present a review of the major existing works in acrylic sculpture and design that indicate in a quite remarkable way the existing achievements of artists in the use of this new medium. The work illustrated ranges from Lamis's cubes to Stones' two-dimensional pyramids, not to mention Buckminster Fuller's inevitable geodesic dome. The visual impact of all this is really quite remarkable but as Bunch reminds us the best is yet to come "No-one yet knows all that can be done with acrylic: it is too new a substance and only a few artists and designers have explored it". Clearly there are further volumes yet to come too.

John Eggleston.

### Clay in School, Joan Dean

London: Evans Brothers Ltd. £2.50

This is an excellent book, very clearly and attractively set out with many sketches, some photographs and a minimum of words. It is for the Primary or Middle School teacher who wants to start clay work or indeed anyone who wants to know about the basis of work with this material. It will also prove useful to anyone with some knowledge who wishes to extend their work because it gives many sound basic ideas for development.

Some illustration sequences may seem rather naive and aimed at the pupil rather than the teacher, especially in the early part of the work. For example: caption; "A broom will be needed", illustration; a small girl holding a broom. However this method of explanation is carried right through the book and in the great majority of examples the sketches communicate useful ideas beyond the captions.

Necessary organisation of space, equipment and tools, together with problems



likely to arise and effective solutions are clearly described and illustrated. The preparation and care of materials, techniques of glazing, a variety of methods of decoration, simple mould making, modelling, the production of coils and coil pots, slabs and slab work and the basis of throwing are all well covered. The section which shows a series of methods of firing work, starting with bonfires and developing to elementary brick kilns which children could assemble, is particularly good.

John F. Fisher

**Victorian and Edwardian Sussex,**  
James S. Gray

*London: Batsford £2.70*

Occasionally the picture book achieves a purpose beyond the characteristically limited aim of its *genre* — to satisfy ephemeral curiosity with a spasmodic collection of photographs. Gray's collection of Victorian and Edwardian Sussex is one of the few that does it presents an illuminating guide to events of the past century that achieves a level of explanation that many orthodox guide books fail to attain. It is particularly rich in the history of craftsmanship. Not only are the developments of the building crafts in the period clearly indicated but also are the burgeoning new trades of railway engineering, shipbuilding and agricultural engineering. In doing so it makes a most useful contribution to the current reappraisal of the craft components of the industrialisation of the past century.

John Eggleston

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