

functions of words, phrases, and subordinate sentences, there should be little difficulty in teaching them to arrange those parts into a well-ordered sentence. I should like to see Abbott's little book, "How to Write Clearly," adopted in our higher classes.

SPELLING.—Oral spelling is generally successfully taught, but in the written work sufficient care is not always taken to prevent wrong images of words being impressed upon the brain. Pupils should never be asked to write words that they cannot reasonably be expected to spell correctly.

WRITING.—Recollecting my keen scrutiny of the copy-books in 1879, many teachers presented books with only two or three pages written in them. If carefully written and clean, I have invariably passed them; but I shall not again pass fewer than 20 pages. At Home about 70 pages are required. As a rule the country schools show much better writing than the town schools. The directions given in my last report for conducting a writing lesson are simple, easy of application, and most effective in producing good results; yet I have seldom seen them adopted in our large schools—the very place where they most need adoption. Passing round behind scholars and finding fault with their work is not teaching. The faults should be placed on the black-board, and made the subject of class instruction. Every pupil then profits by the mistakes of his fellows. So long as teachers fail to recognize the necessity for class-teaching in this subject, so long will the quality of the results gained be inferior. In the junior classes I frequently find the pupils writing with bits of pencil about an inch long. This of course is never allowed in a well-managed school. Pupils are there made to write with long pencils, and to hold the pencil as they will afterwards have to hold the pen. More than half the children in the district hold the pen improperly, and sit at the desk in an improper attitude.

ARITHMETIC.—The mechanical operations are generally satisfactorily performed, but there is a great lack of ability to apply the rules to the solution of easy problems. If one says divide 757,683 by 87, the majority of the pupils will work out the correct answer; but, if the question be stated thus: What number multiplied by 87 will give the product 757,683? more than two-thirds of them will stare at the sum in utter bewilderment, and will either not answer at all, or will multiply 757,683 by 87. In my opinion, abstract numbers are dealt with much too largely both in the lower and in the upper classes. Text-books are too often made to do duty for black-board exercise, and there is a great lack of thorough-going class-teaching. Children should be trained to construct easy problems as well as to solve them. This was suggested last year, but the suggestion has not that I know of been acted upon. Mental arithmetic is a prominent feature in my examinations, and it is satisfactory to be able to report an improvement in this exercise. The addition and multiplication tables are still badly known in the lower classes. One still sees a deal of counting on the fingers in all the classes.

GEOGRAPHY.—Table I. shows a very creditable improvement in this subject. In several schools it is well taught, but in very many the teaching is either very indifferent or very bad. In these latter the factors necessary for effective teaching are almost wholly wanting: (1) A definite notion of what is a fair amount of work for one lesson; (2) a full knowledge of this work by the teacher; and (3) some previous home preparation of the lesson by the pupils.

HISTORY.—Considering that this subject is so new to our schools, I think the percentage gained is satisfactory. Considerable difficulty has been felt in the matter of a suitable text-book. This difficulty has, however, now been removed, as, at the request of the Board, the department has sanctioned the use of Creighton's "Shilling History of England." This is an excellent little book for the private study of the pupils, and I hope to see it largely adopted. For their own private use teachers will find the "Epochs of English History," edited by the same author, of great service. They are published at a shilling each, and are thus within the reach of all.

SEWING.—In those schools in which this subject is taught by one of the staff—the mistress or an assistant—the work done is for the most part excellent, but in those in which it is taught by a work-mistress the character of the work is not nearly so satisfactory.

SINGING AND DRAWING.—In most of the large and in a few of the small schools singing is well taught, but in the rest the teachers excuse themselves on the plea that they cannot sing. Drawing is taught in several schools, but in most it is not attempted. Referring to the quarterly returns furnished by the teachers to the Secretary, I find that 2,622 pupils are said to be learning drawing in this district. This return is erroneous. I have found in a large number of schools that, if pupils are learning to draw maps, they are returned as learning to draw. Of course, this is not the meaning of the term "drawing" as defined by the regulations.

SCIENCE AND OBJECT-LESSONS.—In some schools an honest, and more or less successful, effort is made to overtake the science work of the syllabus, but in most hardly anything is even attempted. The schools that got the best results in the science subjects invariably passed well in the essentials. Object-lessons are well given by a few teachers, fairly by several, and more or less badly by the rest.

DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOUR.—Many teachers are content to work with much more noise than is necessary—indeed than is compatible with anything like sound instruction, and do not appear to regard it as a serious matter if many members of their class are paying no attention to the lesson in hand. This partial attention is fruitful of many evils, not the least of which are the dishonest practices of copying and prompting. In some schools the signal for a change of lessons is also the signal for a babel of noise; and a similar remark applies to the bringing-in from the play-ground and the dismissal. In many schools children are taught not only reading, spelling, &c., but also respect for the feelings of others, and for authority, deference to age, self-restraint, and much else that is summed up in the term politeness, but I regret to say that in some very boorish manners are tolerated. In my view the teacher that does not attend to the manners of his pupils fails to discharge a very important part of his duties.

RECORDS AND ATTENDANCE.—The registers are generally neatly and, I believe, faithfully kept; but all do not, as required by the Board's instructions, show the classification of the school. The attendance is both irregular and unpunctual. The enforcing of the compulsory clauses of the Act would, I think, greatly improve the quality of the attendance.

DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL.—The school was examined by me in the higher branches in November