

such bright and subtle intellects. He may even doubt whether European children could have done better. Some such effect as this, is, I am inclined to think, not unfrequently produced in the minds of visitors to the schools marked I. or II. in the column headed "Efficiency of Schools," in Table III. in the Appendix.

METHODS.

The methods formerly used in Native schools were what are now considered old-fashioned. The work of the teacher consisted mainly in testing work that had been done by his pupils. But few attempts seem to have been made to lead pupils, step by step, from what is simple and easy to what is complex and difficult. The necessity for making sure that every elementary fact or principle is firmly grasped by the pupil before any combination of, or deduction from, such facts or principles is attempted, was but imperfectly recognized. Teachers, in effect, said to their pupils, "Go and find out how to do this," rather than "Come and let us find out how this should be done." The consequence was that while clever children sometimes succeeded in mastering many difficulties, and in getting for themselves a certain amount of education, those of average or inferior ability learnt little or nothing. The methods formerly in use were in the majority of cases as follows: In a reading lesson the teacher would listen to a boy's reading, carefully correct his mistakes, and, after the reading was over, question him about the meanings of words in the lesson, and perhaps about the subject-matter. At the writing lesson the pupil would write a copy, and the master would correct the mistakes made, and possibly reprimand or punish the pupil for making them. When teaching geography the master would ask the children to point out places on the map, to repeat names of natural features in their proper order, and perhaps would give them a lesson from some text-book, to be committed to memory and repeated the next day. Arithmetic lessons consisted mainly of more or less successful attempts on the part of children to master rules sufficiently to enable them to work perfectly straightforward questions in these rules, assistance being given by the master as sparingly as possible. It appears to have been thought that the master's principal duty was to see that correct answers to questions had been obtained by legitimate means. When a boy had floundered through a "rule" in this fashion, he was supposed to know that rule and to have done with it for evermore. Masters have sometimes been surprised to find that boys who were in proportion or practice were quite unable to deal with such a simple question as "If you take 395 from 1,006, how many will remain?" The boys had been through all the rules in regular order, and their failure could be attributed only to some astounding and unaccountable mental defect of theirs; the real truth being, of course, that they had never been trained to understand the scope and object of any arithmetical process whatever. They had learned to perform certain operations mechanically, as it were, but had never had a chance of learning the true meaning of the work they had done. In English, the most important of the Native school subjects, there was seldom any systematic teaching whatever.

Of course many of the masters used better methods than these while dealing with some of the subjects. In but few schools were all the subjects badly taught. In many cases the teachers had discovered very ingenious and effective methods of teaching certain things. But in nearly all the schools one or more of the branches appear to have been taught in the way that I have described. Collective teaching was little practised. The children were taught in classes, certainly, but attempts were seldom made to cause every child in a class to receive the full benefit derivable from all work done in it. The teaching was, in effect, individual teaching.

In spite of the prevalence of these defective methods, many of the teachers, by sheer hard work, succeeded in making their pupils, at all events the cleverer ones, get on very fairly. With the aid of the more modern and effective methods that are now being gradually introduced, it may reasonably be expected that such teachers will, by-and-by, attain to a high standard of efficiency, and produce results not inferior to those obtained in the best European country schools.

INSTRUCTION.

The quantity and quality of the instruction given at the Native schools may be best estimated by means of a comparison of the Native School Standards with the pass statistics, in Table III. of the Appendix. It will be seen that only thirteen pupils have passed Standard IV., while seventy have succeeded in reaching Standard III. As a matter of fact, only one school has passed in all four standards in such a way as to satisfy the requirements of the Native School Code, and entitle the teacher to a bonus for each standard. 412 children succeeded in passing Standard I., while 195 reached Standard II. This shows that there is a sufficiency of good material for the teachers to work on; and there can be no doubt that they will make use of it by qualifying a large number of children for the higher standards before the end of next year.

The standard examinations at the various schools show that a few remarks are needed on the teaching of each of the subjects that form part of the Native-school course. It is, of course, not to be supposed that every master needs to be prompted with reference to all the points treated of, for some of them are very elementary, but I think that every Native school teacher may very possibly find something in these remarks that will assist him in carrying on his work successfully.

ENGLISH.—English is the most important, and, at the same time, the most difficult subject that the Native school teacher has to deal with. The master's success in teaching this subject